



Memories of Hamaker
1723

1723

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A
HOME TRUTH:
BEING
MEMOIRS
OF THE
Love *and* State-Intrigues
OF THE
COURT of H---;
From the MARRIAGE of the
PRINCESS of Z-----,
To the Tragical DEATH of
COUNT K-----k:

Written originally in *High-German*,
By the Celebrated COUNTESS of K-----k, Sister
to that Unfortunate NOBLEMAN.

The SECOND EDITION.

*Time's Daughter will appear, although she blush
To shew her Nakedness.* _____

L O N D O N :
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THE
INTRIGUES
OF THE
C—T of H—R.



F the Favours of Fortune were to be esteemed invariably so many Indications of superiour Merit, The States of *Germany* would, perhaps, have witnessed less Astonishment, and betrayed less Dissatisfaction, on seeing the Daughter of a *French* Gentleman so highly advanced, as to become the Consort of one of the most considerable Princes in the Empire.

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BUT as that fantastic Deity resembles Justice only in her Blindness, and scatters her Graces at random, entirely careless on whom they fall, the *Germans*, who were not acquainted with the Virtues and Accomplishments of Mademoiselle *d'Obr—se*, did not fail to censure the Duke of *Z—* very severely, for having slighted so many illustrious Ladies of his own Rank, and condescended to cast his Eye on a Foreigner, of scarce noble Blood, who came into the Empire by Chance, in no better Situation than that of one of the Attendants of the Countess * *de Tr—nte*, who being of the Reformed Religion, had retired from *France*, to enjoy the Liberty of Conscience, allowed in *Germany*.

HIS serene Highness had, however, seen Mademoiselle *d'Obr—se*, for the first Time, at *Breda*; and the Impression her Beauties, then in their full Bloom, had made upon him, no Considerations whatever could efface.

BUT, that she was young and amiable, was not the only Excuse the Duke had to plead for casting his Eyes so low: she was innocent; she was discreet; she was virtuous. If she attracted the Eyes and Admiration

* A Princess of one of the Branches of *Hesse*: Mademoiselle *d'Obr—se* was her Maid of Honour.

miration of every Body where she came, it seemed rather to illustrate her Modesty, than awake her Vanity ; and the Applause that ever waited upon her distinguished Perfections, to her appeared but the Effects of common Complaisance.

HAD she, therefore, descended from Ancestors equally illustrious with those of the Duke, she had been worth his Ambition ; and humbly born as she was, with so much Beauty, and so much Virtue, none but the vain-glorious Great could blame his Choice ; which, if not calculated to flatter his Pride, promised him abundant Amends in Happiness.

LOVE, we all know, is a Leveller : It was no wonder, therefore, to see the Duke, though a *German*, forgetting his high State, and submitting to a Power superiour to his own.

BUT though the Greatness of the Offer might have justify'd an eager Acceptance, Mademoiselle *d'Arbr*——*se* behaved with a Moderation upon the Occasion, not to be expected from her Sex or Years ; by remonstrating the extreme Distance between his Highness and herself, and the ill Effects that might be feared from his more recollected Thoughts, when the Prince should again get the upper Hand of the Lover,

and Repentance perhaps bring on Disgust, and Loathing.

INDEED, the Delicacy of these Scruples served only to inflame his Highness the more; who having, in the most warm and passionate Manner, given her repeated Assurances that they were wholly without Foundation, she could no longer reject the Instances, or doubt the Sincerity of a Prince, who gave such unquestionable Proofs of a Passion, to Persons of his sublime Rank, so rarely known.

LET none persuade themselves that there was more of Artifice, than Reality, in this Self-Denial of Mademoiselle *d'Obr—se*; for, when actually become Consort to the Duke, and thereby authorized to share in his Titles as well as in his Bed, she betrayed no Impatience to enjoy what other Ladies so passionately long for; in—somuch, that many Years passed before the Duke applied to the † Emperor *Leopold*, to invest her with the Ducal Dignity, and acknowledge her in Quality of a Sovereign Princess; nor was this Compliance then extorted from him by her Importunities, but flowed freely from his own Ex—
perience

† It is to be observed, that if a Prince of the Empire marries a Lady of inferior Rank, she cannot assume her Husband's Title, without an express Patent from the Emperor.

perience of her transcendant Merit ; and so earnestly did he prosecute his Suit in her Favour, at the Imperial Court, that tho' it was travers'd by the whole Weight and Interest of *Ern—A—g—st—s*, *E—ct—r* of *H—r*, his Brother, he had the Pleasure to carry his Point, and salute her Dutcheſs of *Z—*.

THE *E—r* of *H—r* had, ever ſince this Marriage, been doubly incenſed againſt the Prince his Brother ; that is to ſay, for marrying a Lady who was ſo far his Inferiour in Birth, and for his Breach of Promiſe in marrying at all.

HE had, however, in part diſſembled his Diſſatisfaction ; for till Madam *d'Obr—ſe* was created Dutcheſs of *Z—* by the Emperor, her Children could not ſucceed to the Sovereignty, which, in ſuch Caſe, devolved to the Houſe of *H—r*, who were the preſumptive Heirs : It was, therefore, the Intereſt of the Elector to oppoſe her Advancement with all his Strength, which he did openly, and without any Reſerve though not with the deſired Succeſs. His Imperial Majeſty was then at War with the *Turks*, and the Duke of *Z—* out-bidding his Brother, in the Aſſiſtance he contributed againſt the common Enemy, got the better in the Conteſt ; the Actions of Princes being governed by their Intereſts

and Passions as well as those of private Men.

IF the Duchess of Z—— was attach'd to her Illustrious Consort by Inclination before, Gratitude now strengthened the Union, and it became the sole Endeavour of her Life to make him Happy: while their Subjects, charm'd with an Example so seldom to be met with in Courts, wearied Heaven with Prayers for an hereditary Prince, who might inherit the Virtues of his Parents, and prove an equal Blessing to their Posterity. But their Desires did not suit with the unsearchable Decrees of Providence; and the only Fruit of this happy Marriage was one Daughter, who became celebrated for her Gifts and Graces, but more for her Misfortunes.

FOR this young Lady, when in the full Bloom of her Youth and Beauty, adorn'd with an Education worthy her high Birth, several of the neighbouring Princes became Suiters to the Duke her Father. But of all, the Prince of *W-lf-mb-t-l* had the fairest Prospect of being the happy Man: His Proposals were not only heard favourably, but actually accepted; the Princess herself made no Objections, and scarce any thing remained in Dispute, but the very Day of Consummation: a Day that, to her inexpressible Misfortune, never arriv'd!

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THE Elector of *H—r*, as it is easy to imagine, could by no means relish a Marriage, which cut off all Hopes of uniting his Brother's Dominions to his own; the Thing in the Universe which he coveted most; but found himself under a double Difficulty to break it off, *viz.* the Progress which the Prince of *W-lf-mb-t-l* had already made, and the Aversion which the *El—*ess his Consort had testify'd to the Marriage of the Prince her eldest Son, with the Princess of *Z—*, who was tainted, as she thought, with the mean Birth of her Mother. She had, moreover, raised her Thoughts to an Alliance with the Royal House of *E—d*, from which, she herself had the Honour to be descended; and the *El—*al Prince had actually made a Visit to that Kingdom, with the View of paying his Addresses to the Lady *A—*, since so celebrated in the Annals of *Europe*.

To surmount both these Obstacles, the *El—r*, however, address'd himself, with a Resolution not to be disappointed; and to begin with what, he thought the greatest, the Prejudice of the *El—*ess—ess he not only endeavoured himself to win her over to his Measures, but besieged her round with the joint Instances of every one whose Judgment she had any Opinion of, or who had any Share of her

Confidence and Favour : And with such surprizing Success were their Endeavours attended, that, from opposing this favourite Measure of the El—r's with Vehemence, she all at once espoused it as warmly ; nay, even made a Point of being entrusted with the whole Management of the Affair herself.

IN Truth, no Person was better qualified for the Undertaking ; for she was equally a profound Politician, and a refin'd Courtier ; and, though she had ever treated the Duchess of Z— with a Haughtiness scarce excusable, she had, nevertheless, found out a Way to qualify it in such a Manner to the Duke, that, instead of resenting it, he almost looked upon the Continuance of her Respect to him as a Favour.

WITH this Ascendancy over the Mind of the Duke, she wisely resolved to be her own Embassadress, as if fully persuaded that, however intractable he might prove to others, he would be able to deny her nothing : To the Weight of her own Instances, she likewise thought proper to add all the Advantages to be gathered from a Surprize ; and therefore, without dropping the least Hint to any Body of her Intentions, she ordered her Equipage to be made ready, and at the Close of a Summer's Day,

Day, set out for * Z——; where, by the Help of proper Relays, she arrived so early the next Morning, that both the Duke and Duchess were yet a Bed : Nor would she suffer any Notice to be given them of her Arrival, but, dispensing with all Ceremony, insisted on being introduced to their Bed-side ; which was done accordingly.

BUT nothing could equal the Astonishment of both, on hearing the Door opened without their Command, and seeing the El——res enter, who was the Person in the World least expected, and to the Lady, perhaps, the least Welcome.

As no body knew better than the E——s, that, among Princes especially, such Freedoms were almost without Precedent ; she made Haste to unriddle a Mystery, which she could not help seeing created more Pain than Pleasure ; but, with a Strain of Policy which had something of cruel in it, chose to express herself in *German*, which she knew the Duchess did not understand.

WHAT Arguments derived from Proximity of Blood, mutual Interest, mutual Danger, Family, Personal or National Concerns, she employed to carry her Point, it is needless to suggest : But so powerful were

* But ten Leagues distant from H——.

were those Arguments, of whatever Kind, so happy her Persuasion, or so irresistible her Influence, that, in two short Hours, she unravelled all the Prince of *W-lf-m-b-t-l's* Negotiations, and obtained a positive Promise, that the Heiress of *Z—* should be disposed of to none but her first Cousin *P— G—* ; with the whole Duchy of *Z—* for her Dowry.

THE Duchess, however, was too much a Woman to bear so long a Conversation, one Word of which she did not understand, without expressing great Uneasiness, nor by frequent Interruptions, conjuring her Consort to let her share in the Secret, which her *El——al* Highness took such Care to keep her a Stranger to. But, tho' the Duke had hitherto comply'd with her Inclinations in all Things, this condescending Visit so effectually flattered his Pride, that Love had lost its usual Hold, and her repeated Importunities seem'd only to produce so many Denials; the *El——re's* having first unbosomed, on Condition, that the Duchess should not be made acquainted-with the Occasion of her coming, 'till he had given her a decisive Answer.

As Curiosity has no Rest till it is gratified, the Duchess thought every Moment an Age, till she had an Opportunity of sifting out the Truth ; which, no doubt, she

she had not the less Appetite for, because it had been so often denied her. But provided we are let into a Secret, we care not how dearly we pay for it ; and thus, when the Duchess was at last indulged with what she had so vehemently desired, instead of curing, it only served to redouble her Vexation.

THOUGH she had not presum'd openly to resent the Sights put upon her by the House of *H—*, they had left a very bitter Relish upon her Memory ; and, by the Manner in which the *El—s* had now treated her, she saw no Prospect of Advantage to herself, even from a Marriage which that Princess had taken such an extraordinary Step to bring about. She was not without Apprehensions neither, that the Contempt thrown upon her would descend likewise to her Daughter ; for whose Happiness she was tenderly concerned, and which seemed to be little consulted in a Match that had nothing but Interest for its Foundation ; the young Prince having already contracted such a Familiarity with a certain * *H—r-Lady*, as sufficiently witnessed that his Bride would have but a very slender Interest in his Heart.

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* *H—rr—tt*, of *Mus—b—ch*, Sister to the Countess of *Pl—t—n* ; first married to *Chr—st—n V—nd—n B—sch*, and afterwards to *Ern—st Ulr—ch*.

REVOLVING these and many other perplexing Thoughts, she could not help bursting into a Torrent of Tears, and with the utmost Earnestness, beseeching her Lord to have a due Concern for his Daughter's Happiness, however indifferent he was grown to hers ; nor did she forget to mingle such Reasons with her Passion, as might authorize this first Opposition she ever offered to his Will, and induce him to alter his Mind a second Time. But all in vain. Neither the Consideration of his Breach of Faith to the Duke of *W-lf-mb-t-l*, nor the apparent Affront offer'd to his Duchess, nor the Hazards which threaten'd his Daughter, seemed to have any Weight. The aggrandizing the House of *L-nb--gh* had swallowed up every other Concern, and she who had, till that fatal Moment, been able to influence his Resolutions as she pleased, from that fatal Moment lost her Influence entirely, and could recover it no more.

THE El——fs, indeed, rightly apprehending that the Duchess would not fail to oppose, with her whole Strength, a Project which was concerted not only without her Participation, but in Defiance of all she could do to render it abortive, resolved to give the Duke no Time to cool, and therefore dispatched a Courier immediately

diately to *H—r*, both to acquaint the *El—r* with the Success of her Negotiations, and require the Presence of her Son forthwith; that Delays might not prove as fatal to his Pretensions, as they had to those of the Prince of *W-lf-mb-t-l*, his Rival. Nor did she stop here, but employed the Interval in adjusting the Marriage-Articles, to the minutest Circumstance; so that when his *El—al* Highness arrived, he had nothing to do but to make his Compliments, and take Possession of his Bride.

AMBITION hath its Ardour as well as Love; but then 'tis of a very different Kind, as was evidenced in the Behaviour of this young Prince, who appeared rather as a Suiter to the Duchy, than to the Lady in whose Right He was one Day to enjoy it. But all that was wanting in Gallantry on his Side, being amply made up by the Address of the *El—fs* his Mother, a short Day was appointed for the nuptial Ceremony, which was performed with as much Pomp and Solemnity as the Time would give Leave.

BOTH the Bride and Bridegroom who were to be the principal Figures, were so adorned with the Court-glitter usual upon these Occasions, that if, by their outward Pomp, the Spectators had been to guess of their inward Tranquillity, they might have been
rank'd

rank'd justly among the happiest Persons in the Universe.

BUT neither Gold, nor Jewels, nor State, nor Sovereignty, bestow Happiness; and a heavy Heart will, in the midst of all, hang a Cloud upon the Brow. It was thus with the Princess: she looked upon herself as a State-Victim; and though she was all Resignation, betray'd such a Melancholly as would have become *Iphigenia*, when on the Point of being sacrificed.

As for the Bridegroom, he was, by Nature, sullen, reserv'd, haughty, and selfish; he considered the Princess as only the Title-Deeds to the Duchy of Z—, which even his Father did not more greedily long for; and consequently behaved like one going through a Ceremonial which he thought tedious and burdensome, but found necessary. An Affectation of Gallantry he was obliged to put on, but then it was visibly an Affectation; and though he gave his Hand to his Bride, his Heart remained still in the Bosom of his Mistress.

APPEARANCES of this untoward Nature, were by no means pleasing either to the Duke or Duchess; the last especially being scarce able to conceal her Chagrin, which escaped in frequent Sighs, that she found it impossible to stifle. The El——is was indeed the only happy Person; who at
this

this triumphant Crisis, enjoyed all the Transport of Politicians, who ask only for Success to their Measures, and laugh at all other Considerations.

No outward Marks of Satisfaction, however, were wanting to deceive the Public into an Opinion, that Princes are to the full as happy as they are great.

THIS favourite Point thus effectually obtained, neither the El——s nor her Son had any further Business at Z——. In a few Days after the Solemnity, therefore, they set out for H——, together with the Bride, whose Grief upon quitting her Parents, was no Way diminish'd, either by the pompous Reception she met with from the El——r, her Father-in-Law, or the phlegmatic Caresses of the Prince her Husband.

AMBITION and Gallantry, as in most other Courts, were at this Juncture the establish'd Idols in that of H——; and, according to the usual Course of Exchange between the Sexes, Ladies became powerfull, and Lords were made happy, by mutual Obligations conferred upon each other.

WHERE such was the Commerce, it is not to be wondered that Dress, Equipage, Balls, and every other fashionable Ostentation, gave a Lustre to the Place where
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it was so industriously carry'd on; nor that foreign Adventurers should put in there with a flattering Gale of Hope, as to a Port where Fortune promised to make their Voyage prosperous.

THE El——r himself, though his Manner, like that of the Rest of the *German* Princes (who all affect to be thought so many little *Cæsars*) favour'd rather too much of the Buskin, was not wanting either in Courtesy or Munificence: And as to the El——s, having in her very Infancy been made acquainted with Adversity, it had both improv'd her Head, and soften'd her Heart; whence it followed that she was alike capable of distinguishing Merit, and relieving Calamity. Besides, such was her Address, that if all who besought her Protection could not be serv'd to their Wishes, all were obliged even beyond them. Her Pride affected only those who were of equal Rank to herself; to those beneath her, she was all Condescension: And though the Duchess of Z—— complained of her Haughtiness, but few could be persuaded to think her Complaints were just. To sum up the rest of her Character in few Words: She was as much a Mistress of Books and Languages, as the Arts of Courts; for in her Youth, when the whole Family of
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the King her Father were made the Sport of Fortune, Learning had been her Consolation, and became now her Glory.

To this Court, so brilliant before, the late Marriage made no small Addition of Splendour ; for the young Nobility then at Z—, as well Natives as Strangers, thought it a Point of Duty as well as Gallantry to wait upon the Bride to the Court of the Prince her Husband ; and at their Head appear'd the young Count *K—nngs—rk*, a noble *Swede*, in the Flower of his Age, admirably well made, tall, handsome, with flowing Hair, sprightly Eyes ; in one Word, an equal Mixture of *Mars* and *Adonis*. — Though born in *Sweden*, he had been trained up in the Court of Z——, and while both the Princess and he were Children, had often the Honour to be distinguished by her, as one whose Services she relish'd most : Approbation on one Hand, therefore, did not fail to produce Zeal and Assiduity on the other ; and though neither, perhaps, was aware of the Cause, the Princess never appear'd so gay, as in the Company of young *K—nngs—rk* ; nor *K—nngs—rk* so happy, as when waiting upon the Princess.

WITH what Eye, therefore, he regarded this Marriage, need not be explained ; and that the Princess was pleased to see

him in her Circle at *H*——, cannot be doubted. She saw herself surrounded with Strangers ; she found herself soon to be held of little Consequence, and discover'd that the Herd of Courtiers presumed to treat her accordingly. A Confident, therefore, to unbosom to, to advise with, to receive both Council and Consolation from, was what she could not fail to long for, and in him preferable to all others. On the other Hand, the Count, who had ever considered her as his Day-Star which he never failed to worship, could no longer think of returning to *Z*——, which had now lost its only Charm, but desired above all Things to continue within the Reach of her Eye, and to make her the Regent of his Fate. In order to which, he found Ways and Means to recommend himself so effectually to the *El*——r, that he soon obtained a Commission in his Forces, and a Stipend suitable to his Rank.

BUT this was far short of his Desires.— To have a Pretence to reside at *H*——, was laying the Foundation ; but nothing short of a free Access to Court, could finish the Building: In order, therefore, to accomplish the rest, he paid his Court with all the Address he was Master of, to Prince *Charles*, Brother to his *El*——l
High-

High—fs, who spent almost every Evening among the Ladies of his Mother's Court, and often selected some young Lord or other to be of the Party: Nor did his Endeavours fail him, for the young Prince became in a very short Time so entirely attach'd to the gallant *Swede*, that he prefer'd his Company to all other, and thenceforward never made a Visit without him.

HITHERTO the Count had followed the Princess, and delighted in her Company, almost he knew not why; chusing rather to persuade himself, that he made his Court to a Patroness, than aspired to her more immediate Favour. But this daily Access, the gracious Reception he always met with, and the Discovery he soon began to make, that the Marriages of Princes were more calculated to flatter their Ambition, than gratify their more tender Passions, by administering Food to his Hope, made him sensible, that this eager Attachment bordered very nearly upon Love.

BUT Love was a Sound not even to be whispered without Danger. Over and above the Disproportion of Rank, the Princess was now married, and every Thing was to be apprehended from the Power of her Consort, as well as her own

unquestionable Virtue. Prudence, therefore, dissuaded him even from thinking of what it was impossible for him to obtain: But Vanity and Self-Delusion removed and lessened every Obstacle, and by falling in with his Passions, like all other Sycophants, led him on blind-fold to his Ruin. To see her, to meet her Regards, to enjoy the Pleasure of her Conversation, to receive the Honour of her Commands, he proposed to make the Bounds of his Ambition, and esteemed *Elysium* itself, in Comparison to the Hell of an eternal Banishment, whether Despair would be sure to follow him.

As to the Princess, who had ever shewn him a more than ordinary Regard, without discovering any particular Reason for so doing, she could not help being more pleased than ever, to see him entertained in a Court, where she was now established for Life, and where she began already to presage, she should stand in need of a Counsellor and a Friend: Of this she did not fail to give him a gracious Hint, the very first Time she had an Opportunity; and though the Terms she used, were such as were dictated only by her own secret Discontents, the Count did not fail to give them such a Turn, as best corresponded with his own
tow'ring

tow'ring Wishes. Such a Seducer is Love !

WHOEVER from beneath had looked up to the Princess upon her State-Eminence, so great in herself, so advantageously married, and as the Mother (for so she soon became) of a Prince, would have been tempted to rank her among the happiest of Women : But, alas ! the Fact was very different from the Appearance. The El——r treated her with Complaisance, but it was apparently forced, cold, and unnatural ; the El——fs, though one of the best-bred Women of her Time, with scarce any Complaisance at all ; as if she thought the Daughter of Madam *d'Obr——se*, had nothing to claim in Right of her Descent from the Duke of Z—— : The Prince, her Consort, thought himself authorized to copy the Behaviour of his Parents, with a cruel Fidelity ; and, what was worst of all, the Countess of *Pl——n*, the El——r's Mistress, vied with her in all Things ; nay, affected a Superiority, and seemed to look down upon her, as no more than a State-Cypher.

THIS intriguing Lady was a native of *Hesse*, and nobly descended ; but the Count *de Pl——n*, her Husband, was more obliged to his good Fortune, than his Birth ; having owed his Elevation solely to his

Ascendancy over the El—r, his Master's Temper, which he had studied with the utmost exactness, and knew as exactly how to gratify and oblige.

BUT, though he was sole Favourite, to share in the El—r's good Graces, only by Reflection, by no means suited the aspiring Temper of his Wife: Nothing less would satisfy her than an Interest of her own; and this, through the Mediation of her own Charms, and a thorough Loyalty, which she thought admitted of no Reserve, she soon saw herself in full Possession of; insomuch, that all Suits were made to her, and all Favours passed thro' her Hands, though not altogether entire, as they were granted.

To be of Importance to some Persons is not sufficient, unless it is publicly seen and acknowledged; and of this ostentatious Class was the Countess; one of whose chief Cares was, to have it known, as publicly as possible, that she governed him who governed the El—ate. She had, likewise, the Vanity to have her public Days, and to play the Queen of her own Circle, distinguishing and discountenancing, complementing and neglecting, as best tally'd with her Humour, or her Interest; and while this Mock-Court of hers swarm-
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ed with Company of all Degrees, the Princess's was almost a Desert.

It is not to be presum'd that the Count her Husband was ignorant of the Secret to which she owed her Power: But his Wife was not a more devoted Subject than he was a complaisant Courtier; and in Proportion as she grew more pleasing to his Sovereign, she became more dear to him. That however this Tenderness of his might not give Umbrage, he took Care to make his ordinary Residence at *L—nd—n*, under the Pretence of an extreme Passion for the Beauties of that Place; and the El—r, on the other Hand, to render this Retreat yet more agreeable, made him his first Minister, and by his Interest at *Vienna*, advanced him to the Dignity of a Count of the Empire.

BUT, though this Commerce between the El—r and the Countess was so notorious, and the Price it cost him so extravagant, such was the Discretion or Insensibility of the El—ress, that she never once in her Life hinted a Complaint of either, or seem'd to know she was injur'd, or even treated the Countess as one she had the least Reason to be dissatisfied with: Which convenient Blindness, or Excess of Complaisance, tho' it did not reclaim the El—r, obliged him to such a Degree, that

he never failed to treat her with the utmost Respect, and even Veneration; and his Example became a Law to the whole Court.

HAPPY had it been for the Princess, if she had followed the same Plan, and overlooked Trespasses she had not Weight enough either to cure or punish: But she was but just taken out of the Bosom of her Parents, had never conversed with Misfortune, or met with a Rival to vie with her in Place, or Power, or Grandeur. That, therefore, a female Favourite, whose Sway was founded on her Infamy, should presume to contest the Palm of Beauty with her, out-number her in Followers and Dependants, out-shine her in Dress and Equipage, and actually affect to over-look her as a Person of no Significancy, gave her infinite Provocation. Nor did she fail to express her Resentments publicly, nor to expose her upon all Occasions, nor to treat her with all the Haughtiness and Disdain which her own Spleen could prompt, or her superior Dignity and Virtue authorize: Alike thoughtless and careless of the Resentment she might kindle, or the Mischiefs that Resentment might produce.

It hath been already observed, that the Sister of the Countess was Mistress to the El——l Prince, and consequently a sort of
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of Rival to the Princess; notwithstanding which, as her Behaviour was more modest, and she gave no Alarms to her Pride, by endeavouring to eclipse her in the grand Articles of Expence, Equipage, &c. she scarce seemed to bear her any Grudge, but exhausted all her Satire on the Countess only.

THE Princess was of a Disposition rather gay than grave, and above measure fond of Raillery and Ridicule. With this dangerous Humour of hers, *Kings—rk* in particular, had been one of the first to fall in, and, as he soon discovered on what Subject she loved most to employ it, lost no Opportunity of serving up the Countess; who, as often, was used without Mercy.

COURTS are the very Element of Spies: and a Woman of the Countess's Turn, could not fail of having Numbers at her Devotion: That, therefore, she should soon be apprized of the Princess's Hatred to her was but natural; as likewise, that she should as soon resolve to be avenged, if ever Fortune should furnish her with Means and Opportunity. For some Time, however, this Animosity lay in a manner smothered; continual Balls and Banquets at Court seemed to leave no Room for Broils and Heart-burnings; but Discord was ever present notwithstanding. The Countess of

Pl—t—n

Pl—t—n was ever in Figure and Importance the second Person ; consequently so many Feasts were so many Triumphs on one Hand, and Mortifications on the other ; which the Countess seemed to glory in, and the Princess could not forgive.

ABOUT this Time the two Houses of *Austria* and *Bourbon* divided *Europe* into two grand Parties, and *William* then King of *England*, found Ways and Means to engage the *El——r* in the Interest of the first ; as likewise to obtain a Promise from him to induce his Brother the Duke of *Z—*, to become a Party in the same Cause. But this was a Task of no small Difficulty ; for though *B—r—nsd—ff*, the Duke's first Minister, had a Spleen against the *French*, both the Duchess and her Faction in the Council, espoused them as strongly. In order, therefore, to carry his Point more effectually, he thought it adviseable to make a Journey to *Z——*, with his whole Court, as if in Complement to his Brother, and to do a Pleasure to his Daughter-in-law, without any View to Business of any Kind : But when there, though the Day seemingly began and ended with Pleasure, he applied his principal Attention, by all imaginable Ways and Means, to sift out the Duke's own Inclinations, as likewise what Degree of Ascendency the Duchess still seemed to

to have over him ; and from thence gathered, that it behoved him to begin his Negotiations, if Artifices deserve that Name, with her, if he hoped to bring them to a happy Issue.

To the Duchess, therefore, all at once, he changed his Manner entirely ; condescended even to speak in the Style of a Penitent ; acknowledged, that hitherto she had not been treated with the Respect due to her Merits ; hinted, that all the Blame of these Omissions, belonged to the El—fs, who piqu'd herself rather too much on her Royal Descent ; declared, that even she should be prevailed upon to receive and converse with her as a Sister ; and that Both he and she would make her Amends for the past, by their exact and cordial Behaviour to her for the Time to come.

THE Duchess, who was all Sincerity herself, and had besides, no other Ambition but to be treated upon the Level by this haughty Family, fell for the present into the Snare ; and in Return for so many obliging Expressions, made an Offer of her best Services to the El——r without Reserve.

HAVING thus, as he thought, made sure of the Duchess, the El——r began to try his Practices next upon *Br—ndf—ff*, the Duke's first Minister and Favourite ; a
Man

Man possessed of such Plenitude of Power in Z——, that even the Duke himself stood in Awe of him, and durst hardly contradict his own Creature.

INDEED, when touched to the Quick by the Reproaches of the Duchess, he sometimes resumed a Shew of Spirit, and declared he would be his own Minister. But the hot Fit was soon over, and he became as much a Dupe as ever: For hating Business, having been used to be governed, and preferring Hunting to every other Pleasure, *B—r—nsd—ff* seemed more necessary to the Duke, than the Duke to *B—r—nsd—ff*; and he almost took it as a Favour, if he would condescend to ease him of his Power and Authority again.

IN this Sketch, it is easy to see that the Duchess and this Minister were almost at perpetual Variance; and the means she had taken to ballance his Power, by preferring as many *French* as possible to the Duke's Favour, only served to make the Breach the wider: Hence the Politicians were of Opinion, that the El——'rs Visit to Z——, at this Crisis, was originally owing to *B--r--nsd--rff*; as appearing the only means to put an End to the Duchess's Power, and to establish his own without a Rival. This, however, is certain, that the El——r carried his Point, and thereby the whole
House

House of *Lu——rg* threw their Weight into the *Austrian* Scale.

LEST, however, upon his Return to *H——r*, and in Consequence of any Thing which might happen there, the Duchess should go off again from her Engagements, and induce her Consort to do the same, it appeared adviseable that the *El——r* should introduce certain of his Partizans into the Duke's Privy Council. But how to compass it, was the great Difficulty ; since it was, to all Appearance, the joint Interest of both the Duchess and *B——r——nsd——ff* to disappoint him.

HAVING, however, succeeded once already with the Duchess by the Force of Flattery, he resolved to make use of the same Expedient a second Time : Accordingly, in the midst of a Profusion of Complements, by way of Vehicle to the Pill, he opened to her his new Project, explained the Necessity of it with Respect to himself, and the Innocence of it with Respect to her; and finally, by way of Consideration for her good Offices in it, engaged to continue her Appointments of all Kinds, on the same Footing they now were, in case she survived the Duke her Consort.

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THIS masterly Refinement of the El—r's opened the Eyes of the Duchess immediately, and she saw distinctly, however it was coloured over, that this necessary, innocent Project of his was calculated only to take Possession of the Duchy in Effect, even in the Life-Time of her Lord, and of course to disarm her of all Power and Influence for the future. She had, however, Presence of Mind enough to encounter Dissimulation with Dissimulation, and to promise every Thing in her Power, with a settled Resolution, to do her utmost to defeat it ; which, as soon as the El——r had taken his Leave, she very cordially endeavoured, by dispatching a trusty Messenger to *B—r—nsd—ff*, to lay before him the pernicious Consequences of this *H——r*-Master-Piece, to invite him to join Interests, and to assure him, upon these Terms, she would be his Friend for ever.

BUT the El——r had been before-hand with *B—r—nsd—ff*, and had supported his Arguments so effectually, that the poor Duchess found herself without Resource : That crafty Minister holding it much more for his Interest to enter into the Views of a potent Prince, who was one Day to be his Lord, than to espouse the flimsy Schemes of a Woman without Friends

Friends or Power, or Dependance of any Kind, but the precarious Life of the Duke her Consort.

IN Correspondence, therefore, to the Proposals of the designing El—r, he spread before his Master the Web of Policy, which follows, *viz.*

I. THAT since the Marriage of the El——l Prince, with the Princess, the Interests of Z—— and H—— were become the same.

II. THAT, therefore, it was of the utmost Importance to both Courts, to preserve the strictest Union imaginable; which could be done no otherwise than by this mutual Agreement, not to undertake any Thing whatever, without the Participation and Concurrence of each other.

III. THAT not only the two States, but the two Families, would, by this Means, become one; in which Case all Coldness of either Hand would vanish, and the Interests of the Duchess and the Princess become in very Deed, as dear to the whole El——l House, as their own.

IV. THAT, though the El——r condescended to request this close and intimate Union as a Favour, it was easy to prove he might demand it as a Right; and that the Refusal might be attended with very desperate Consequences to the Duchess and her

her Daughter, if they had the Misfortune to survive him.

THE Duke yawn'd over this bold Proposal with his usual Indolence, and had granted all upon the first Suggestion, to be delivered from the Trouble of examining it, if the Duchess had not that Moment entered the Room, and conjured him in the most earnest Manner, to consider the fatal Tendency of what was presented to him; and remonstrated, that from the Moment he gave into it, he would no more be Duke of Z——; his Sovereignty would be departed from him, and he would remain only the Substitute of H——r.

BUT for every Difficulty she started, B—r—nsd—ff was ready with an Answer, and artfully insinuating, that if the Proposal had been made from any other Hand, her Highness would probably have been the first to honour it with her Approbation, the Duke took the Hint to get rid of the Controversy; imputed her Objections to her Animosity to his Favourite, and gave his Assent in the Grois, to all that was proposed to him.

THE El——r, having now gained all his Points, made sure of B—r—nsd—ff, and so garbled the Privy - Council of Z——— as to be secure of a Majority of Voices, took his Leave of the Duke

Duke and Duchess, and with the whole El——l Family, returned to *H——*.

It must here be recollected, that, during the Continuance of this artificial Visit, not only the Duke and Duchess were admitted into the good Graces of their *H——r* Allies, but even the Princess had the Honour of a Share, whose very Husband abated a little of his former Sullenness, and deigned to converse with her as a reasonable Creature ; inasmuch that *K——n——ngsm——rk*, whose only Hope depended on the Continuance of the Prince's visible Coldness, was on the Point of quitting even that slender Hold, and dropping into the Gulph of Despair for ever.

BUT this seeming Happiness of the Princess, was little better than a Dream ; for *H——r* was scarce in Sight, before the Mask was taken off, and her Treatment on all Hands became less excusable than ever : The Prince, in particular, not only avoided her Bed, but her Company, and for two whole Months together, never exchange'd a Syllable with her, nor allow'd her a Moment's Opportunity to enquire the Cause of so sudden and undeserv'd an Alteration.

NOT being able, however, to digest the Affront any longer, as likewise believing it to be her Duty to solícite an Explana-
C
tion,

tion, she one Day made a Shift to surprize him in his Closet alone, and, when able to speak (for Tears and Passion for a while held her speechless) conjured him in the most urgent and affecting Manner, to let her know wherein she had offended, and why he so industriously avoided her. For myself, said she, I am not conscious of a blameable Thought, nor can I attempt to justify my Conduct, till I am informed in what I have had the Misfortune to displease you. If I was conscious of a Fault, I should not presume to assert my Innocence ; and I do not care to think you capable of afflicting me unjustly. But merely to be Innocent, is not all I aspire to ; I would fain make it my Glory to please you, and should esteem it the highest Obligation you can confer on me, if you would point out the Way.

By leaving me to myself,——interrupted the Prince, with a Voice like Thunder, and a Look, if possible, yet more killing ; and withal, rush'd out of the Closet like a Fury, leaving the Princess in Agonies not to be described.

SHE made haste, however, from a Place which was now grown terrible ; and with Grief, Dismay, and Anguish in her Face, returned to her own Apartment, where she found the Baroness *de M——lk* and

K——n——k

K—n—k, waiting to pay their Court, and in the greatest Amazement to see her enter with her Face stained with Tears, and every Feature ruffled, as if with some great Calamity.

THE Baroness was, of all the Ladies in the Court, the most confided in by the Princess, and as to *K—n—k*, she had been long used to think him at her Devotion even to the Jaws of Death. It was but natural, therefore, that, when they pressed her to unbosom the Cause of her Affliction, she should instantly give it Vent, though under the Seal of eternal Secrecy, and with a strict Charge, that their Compassion to her should not suffer Whisper to escape to the Dishonour of the Prince her Husband.

De M—lk made no Scruple to comply with the Princess's Injunctions without Reserve: But as to *K———k*, with an equal Mixture of Zeal and Art, he took upon him to speak of the Prince's Behaviour with a Resentment which his Dependence on the Court of *H—r*, could ill justify: He that is insensible of so much Virtue and so much Beauty, said he, is unworthy of so much Tenderness and Delicacy; he deserves rather your Anger, your Disdain, your utter Forgetfulness, that ever such a Man had a Being: Or rather, he doth not

deserve to be at all. The whole World, Madam, would espouse your Cause, and declare your Vengeance to be just.

You are too rash, *K——k*, you are too rash, reply'd the Princess; nor can I suffer you to use such Expressions in my Hearing; nor ought I to pardon you for having used them at all. However injurious his Treatment has been, he is still my Husband, and we must not forget our Duty, though he hath violated his. I am unfortunate, but I never will be guilty.

How much soever the Count long'd to make the Princess sensible of his peculiar Zeal and Attachment, he durst not reply; but leaning against a Table which was near him, contented himself with fixing his fine Eyes full upon her, in which very expressively appeared, Love and Indignation struggling for Escape, and withheld only by a Fear of giving Offence. The Princess, likewise, found her Eyes in a manner fastened to his; the Baroness had hers bent towards the Ground, and all continued in a profound, pensive, and perplexed Silence; when Prince *Charles*, to their great Surprise, made his Appearance: upon which the Princess recovering herself, with all the Address she was Mistress of, gave his Highness to understand, that, finding herself indispos'd, she was that Moment on the Point of sending
ing

ing the Count to make him acquainted with it, that he might not be at the Trouble of a Visit, which could afford him but little Entertainment.

THE Prince, though somewhat alarmed at the Scene he had interrupted, made a civil Reply, and took his Leave; *K——k*, likewise, being under a Necessity to bear him Company; but so much altered in his Looks and Manner, that the Prince could not help taking Notice of it, nor of enquiring, with a particular Shrewdness in his Face, whether Love was not the Cause; Love, not waited on by Smiles and Graces, but with Bitterness, Pain and Disappointment? Be ingenuous, continued he, have not I probed your Wound to the Quick? And, if I have, make me your Confident, and consult me upon the Cure.

IF the Count was troubled before, he was embarrassed now; but thinking Dissimulation was now become Self-Defence, stood upon his Guard, and utterly deny'd what he had been so ill able to conceal: The Prince, however, did not seem entirely satisfied with his Answer, and in his Reply gave him to understand, that when a Thing is suspected, it is half discovered. If, therefore, Count, says he, you have not treated me as a Friend, don't wonder

if you find me an Enemy. I shall watch you narrowly, and, if I get at your Secret, remember, he that is not trusted, cannot be reproached with Perfidy.

HAPPILY for *K*——*k*, certain Court Lords here joined the Prince, and saved him the Pain of an Answer, which he was greatly at a Loss to make : But, though relieved from the present Perplexity, he could hardly call it a Deliverance. A Thousand Uneasinesses, the Result of these unlucky Queries, possessed him. As Lovers are pictured in Romances, he called every Action, Word, and Glance to Account, in order to find out, if any Escape of his had authorized the Prince to press him so closely on a Point, in which his very Life itself was concerned. But the Review gave him no Satisfaction ; all still remained in Suspence and Uncertainty : And his next Business was, to stifle the Doubts and Fears he could no otherwise get rid of.

HE then turned his Thoughts to the Incident which had happened to the Princess, and could not help finding Matter of Consolation in what had given her so much Affliction. Had she found Happiness lodged in the Bosom of her Consort, she would have had no Temptation to have gone in Quest of it elsewhere : But,

as it was, there was at least Room to hope, that in Time she would be brought to despise and hate his Rival: That she had trusted him with the Secret; that she had forgiven the Hint of Revenge he had so rashly dropped; and that she had suffered her Eyes to hold a Parley with his, he interpreted, with the usual Vanity of Lovers, as so many Favours.

BUT, while the Count indulged himself in these Day-Dreams, the Princess, finding the Agitation of her Mind had taken a dangerous Hold of her Body, was put to Bed, with all the Symptoms of a violent Fever, which increased every Hour to such a Degree, that by Morning it was apprehended to be mortal.

DECORUM, and common Humanity, obliged the El——r and El——s to make a Shew of Concern upon this Occasion; and the last in particular never stirr'd from her Bed-Side, and behaved to her with all the Tenderness of a Mother; which the Princess did not fail to acknowledge in such a Manner, as shewed that she was to the full as sensible of Benefits as Injuries.

THE Prince her Husband, likewise, on this melancholy Occasion found himself obliged to honour her with a Visit, and to let fall some Expressions, not altogether so

harsh, as those he had us'd in their last Closet - Interview, to which the Princess owed her present Malady.

THINKING this, therefore, a favourable Opportunity to make one Essay more to thaw his frozen Heart, she took hold of his Hand, as he sat upon her Bedside, and with a feeble, broken Voice, and Eyes swimming with Tears, I am dying, Prince, said she, and you are the Cause. Your Rigour has broke my Heart. ——— What I did not deserve, I had not Strength to bear. ——— But why should I upbraid you? Your affections were already disposed of, and the empty Title of Wife was all which was reserved for me, in Exchange for all that I could give. — But if you cannot be kind to me, at least be just! acknowledge, at least, that I do not suffer for my Faults; but only through the Severity of my Destiny! Indulge me but in this, and living or dying, you shall have my tenderest Acknowledgements!

A fainting Fit put a Period to her Speech, and delivered the Prince from the Trouble of a Reply: For, before she came again to herself, he had, with great Philosophy, quitted her Apartment.

VEXATION and Resentment now took the Place of Sorrow and Affliction; and she held it unworthy of her to dye for one
who

who had not the Generosity to acknowledge that Innocence, which Calumny itself could not blemish : From that very Hour, therefore, she gathered new Spirits, and in a few Days her Physicians pronounced her to be cut of Danger.

SHE was, however, not only big with Child, when these shocking Tryals befell her, but so near her Time, that, before she had fully recovered her Strength, her Pains overtook her, and she was brought to Bed of a * Princess : At the same Time, likewise, the Reflection of her Misfortunes once more got the better of her Resolution, and she sunk into a deep and settled Melancholly, which no Endeavours of any Kind could remove; for the Prince her Consort had no Share in them: During which gloomy Interval, she kept entirely to her Chamber, saw little Company, desired none; scarce ever spoke or smiled, and seemed to have lost all Relish of Life, and its Enjoyments.

At length, however, to get rid of the Importunity of her Physicians, she consented to be removed to *H—nb—n*, a fine Village belonging to the *El—r*, about a League from *H—r*, whither the *El—ls* had

* The present *Q—n D——r* of *P——a*.

had the Goodness to accompany her, that the censorious World might not have Room to whisper, that her Duchy only was held in Esteem at *H——r*.

CARE was likewise taken, that she should not be incommoded in her Retreat with too much Company, and too many Attendants. The *El——ls*, indeed, who was more fond of Prince *Charles* than any of her other Children, easily prevailed with her to suffer him to be of the Party, and the Prince made Interest for *K——k* to accompany him; which was also agreed to. But when his Highness acquainted the Count with the Favour that was done him, the last, thinking it to be a Snare for the further Discovery of what he feared was more than guessed at already, believ'd it incumbent on him to find out some Pretext for remaining at *H——r*. But the Prince would admit of no Excuses; and, in Spite of his Discretion, the Count was easily prevailed upon to compliment his Highness with a Compliance, which required more Philosophy than he was Master of to refuse.

THIS little Excursion was no sooner resolved on than executed. Both the Season and the Weather were the finest which the Year affords. The Place itself resembled a little Paradise, and nothing but Tranquility,

lity, which seldom visits the Palaces of Princes, was wanting to make it one indeed.

BUT, if the Goddess herself was absent, every Day had its gilded Cloud to supply her Place. The El——is had a more delicate Taste in Pleasures, than is usually to be found in the Courts of *Germany*: She had read the most refined Authors, conversed with the most polished Men, and had derived from her excellent Mother those Graces and Embellishments of high Life, which only the Ladies can either teach or practice.

HENCE, without having Recourse to dry Precepts, and nauseous Declamations, which only flatter the Pride of the Speaker, and create Disgust in the Hearer, she knew how to strike at the Root of the Princess's Disease, and by gradual and imperceptible Degrees, reconcile her again to the World which she was obliged to converse with, and had too soon learned to abhor.

SOME ingenious Pretence, therefore, she never was at a Loss for, to draw her from her Chamber; to walk, to fish, and be a Spectatress of the Chace, though not exposed to the Fatigues of it: The Garden, the Lake, the Wood, the Grotto, the Alcove, the Vista, were, by turns, the Scene
of

of the Day's Amusement ; and Music, Plays, Dances, and sprightly Conversation, finished the Evening.

OR, if the Weather confined the illustrious Company within Doors, Invention was never at a Stand, or Time found burdensome: Trifling was sometimes rendered not only entertaining but ingenious: Sometimes Books were consulted, and the Dead press'd into the Service of the Living ; and sometimes such Curiosities of Art as the Palace was adorn'd with, instead of mere Furniture, became the Subject-Matter of Entertainment and Admiration.

THERE was, in particular, a long Gallery, filled with a Variety of exquisite Paintings, which often furnished out many a pleasing Hour ; and here it was, that from the Portrait of a Lady of incomparable Beauty, which was view'd almost with Astonishment by the Princess, the El——s took the Hint to entertain her with the following History.



THE
HISTORY
OF
The False Favourite.



It is certain, that Princes are more liable to be deceived, than those of a like Degree of Understanding in a lower Rank of Life ; but it is as certain, if ever they discover the Fraud, that the perfidious Servant pays dearly for abusing the Confidence of his Sovereign.

EARL *Ethelwold*, the Favourite of *Edgar* King of *England*, had by a dextrous Turn of Flattery, and a thorough Devotion

Devotion to the Passions of his Royal Master, procured such an Ascendancy over him, that he gave up his Power, Will, Words, and Thoughts to his Direction : His own Reason, nay, his own Senses were under the Dominion of *Ethelwold* ; and even in Love, as well as Empire, he condescended to consult this absolute Favourite.

THE whole Kingdom at that Time, rung with the Name of *Gertrude*, only Daughter, and sole Heiress to *Athelston* Earl of *Devon* : Her Beauty was talk'd of as almost miraculous ; as what the oldest Man living, nor he who had travelled farthest, had never seen any Thing worthy to be compared with : What answered the Idea of a *Venus*, worthy to be adored : what never appeared but with all the Graces in Company, and darted Love through every Eye which presumed too curiously to gaze upon it. Nor was this Lady less formidable to the State, by her Birth and Possessions, than by her superiour Charms. The Earl, her Father, was at the Head of the Nobility, for Wealth, Power, and Popularity ; and, having received some Disgust at Court, had made his Retreat to his own Castle, where he had resided for many Years, with a Splendour
little

little inferiour to the King's; and among his own Vassals was as much rever'd.

THE Beauty of the Daughter, therefore, added to the Weight and Discontent of the Father; became worthy the Consideration of the State; and even the King thought it advisable to secure her to himself, for fear she should be made a Lure to confederate the Nobles against him, and throw the whole Kingdom into Confusion.

BUT political Considerations did not weigh so much with the King, as the Vanity of having the finest Woman in the Universe for his Queen: Her Beauty only made her worthy of his Ambition, and as that answered the Reputation it had obtained, he resolv'd to marry or reject her.

HAVING, therefore, as much Deference for the Taste of *Ethelwold*, as Opinion of his Fidelity, by *his* Eyes and Report he resolv'd to be governed; and accordingly made him his Plenipo in this delicate Affair, which concern'd no less than all the future Weal or Woe of his Life.

Ethelwold was one of these bold Politicians, who consider only what may be gained by a Project, without regarding the Danger or Detriment attending it; and as in this critical Commission, he saw many Openings of Advantage to himself, he never
once

once paused to examine the Inconveniences which they might be counter-balanced with. On the contrary, he applauded the King's Resolution, and in the most sanguine Manner, undertook that it should redound equally to his Interest, Honour, and Happiness.

NOTHING in Cases of this Nature, he knew, could be more grateful to Princes than Expedition : He, therefore, took his Leave, and set out forthwith, though with the utmost Secrecy, that no Cabals might be set on foot to traverse his Negotiations, nor idle Tales be invented to amuse the Public with relation either to the Motive or Success.

THE Earl of *Devon*, it may be supposed, was somewhat surprized at a Visit so little expected ; but, nevertheless, gave his Guest such a Reception, as might oblige a Friend, or reconcile an Enemy : And, *Ethelwold* on his Side, that he might at once preserve the Mystriousness of the Politician, and yet seem to deserve the frank and cordial Entertainment he met with from his Host, disguised the true Intent of his coming, under the specious Pretence of complimenting him with his good Offices, to make up his Breach with the King, and restore him to all the Honours and Distinctions which his high Rank entitled him to.

SUCH

SUCH an extraordinary Advance from the King's principal Favourite, melted the stubborn Heart of this hitherto untractable Grandee at once. He not only embraced him several Times, in Acknowledgement of his Condescension, but introduced him to his Angel-Daughter, with a Command, that she likewise should consider him as one to whom he ow'd the highest Obligation.

NEITHER the sudden Entrance of a Stranger, who was apparently of the first Distinction, nor the visible Emotion with which her Father expressed himself, at all shock'd *Gertrude's* Presence of Mind. Great Beauties are accustomed to the Compliments, Addresses, and Respects of all Mankind ; and are, therefore, then only discomposed, when they are disappointed of them. But it was not thus with *Ethelwold* ; though used to be the Idol of his own Circle, and to share even in the Adoration paid to his Royal Master in his ; though never approached but with the Head in the Dust, nor confronted with an Eye that did not pay Homage to his ; though already prepared by the Voice of the Public to feast his View with the *Phœnix* of her Times, and though his Imagination burn'd, as it were, with the glorious Idea, so far short of the Truth

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was

was all that had been said, or all that he conceived, that he stood before her like a Clown at Court, lost in Admiration and Astonishment, with his Eyes fixed and his Mouth open, attempting to speak, but wanting the Power.

HIS first Recollection, however, was worthy of a Statesman just become a Lover ; that is to say, that though he stood engaged to serve his Master, it would be his wisest Course to serve himself. With all the Address in his Power did he then endeavour to recall his scattered Faculties, and to give such a Turn to his Surprise, as should serve at once as Proof of the Lady's irresistible Charms, and his own Sensibility.

COMING, by Degrees, to the more cool and deliberate Use of his Reason, he concluded within himself, that now was the golden Opportunity to make himself happy for ever. As neither the Lady nor her Father had, nor could have, the least Intimation of the King's Purpose ; as no Man beneath the Throne could make Proposals better worth their Acceptance than himself, he lost no Time in unbosoming his Mind to both : To the Lady, as a Lover, all Passion and Obsequiousness, with Tenderness in his Eye, Persuasion on his Tongue, and Devotion in his Heart :
To

To her Father, as a Politician, shewing what Strength, Grandeur, Honour, and Importance would result to each, from an Alliance alike founded on Interest and Inclination.

THE Earl, he had the Pleasure to find, accepted his Offers greedily ; nor did the Lady give him any Cause to despair. He was the second Person in the Kingdom ; neither old nor unhandſome ; and what was wanting in Love, Vanity ſupply'd.

IN a few Days, therefore, he obtained his Suit ; every Article was adjusted, and the Matrimonial Benediction all that was wanting to put him in Poſſeſſion of the Jewel he ſo ardently coveted.

BUT, however, urgent his Paſſion was, he thought it adviſable to be ſafe as well as happy ; and therefore, with great Dexterity, poſtpon'd the Ceremony, under the Pretence, that it might give Umbrage to the King, and looſen him in his Favour, if he took ſuch a Step, without previously asking his Conſent.

THE Earl approved of his Precaution, and after taking a paſſionate Farewel of his Miſtreſs, he ſet out on his Return for *London* ; where being arrived, and immediately cloſeted, in order to lay open the Succeſs of his Embaſſy, he employed all

the Artifice he was Master of, to bring his crooked Designs to bear; by representing, with a dissembled Gaiety, that Fame had never uttered any Thing so false, as her Account of this Lady, nor yet so true. Every one of her Features, said he, is a Master-Piece; her Forehead is smooth, white, and finely spread; her Brow open, clear, and well-turn'd; her Eye both sweet and full of Fire; her Nose such as would have become a *Venus*; her Mouth lovely, and set round with Dimples; her Hair resembling Gold in the Sun-shine; and her Stature without a Fault. And yet all these Beauties are so fantastically set together, that they have almost as forbidding an Effect, as Deformity itself; for her Eyes are small, and her Nose large; her Forehead flat, and her Cheek-Bones high; her Teeth are white, but her Mouth is wide: Too great a Quantity of Hair, gives her a blowzy Look; too great a Breadth of Face, an Air of Confidence; and too much Colour, the Coarseness of a Dairy-Maid. Besides all which, she is Aukwardness itself; stares like an Idiot; and, in her Gate, is a perfect Hoyden. In short, never any Person before was at once so handsome and foully: Then the Earl her Father, in his Cabals with the discontented Nobles, and in his Household-Riots, to make Court to the
 Populace,

Populace, has grievously impair'd his Estate; so that neither the Wealth of the Father, can give a Lustre to the Charms of his Daughter; nor can the Charms of the Daughter, make Amends for the Father's wasted Fortunes.

As the King had never seen the Lady, nor had the least Suspicion of the Truth, he both swallow'd and digested all that his Favourite thought proper to administer; and only resolved to be no more enamour'd with the Pictures drawn by common Fame.

Ethelwold was, nevertheless, too much a Politician to leave the King's Mind at leisure for After-Thoughts; some Expedient was, therefore, necessary to be found out for his Amusement; but whether in Love or War, he was for some short Time undetermined: For, so a Favourite obtains his Ends, he is quite indifferent as to the Means.

LOVE, however, at last, he held most advisable; as thinking the present, known Beauties of any fine Woman, would be more than a Match for those of a Goddess, if absent, and admired only in Idea.

WITH this View, therefore, he cast his Eyes on an Orphan-Lady of Distinction, who, to escape the ill Usage of her Guardian, had fled to a Cloister, and from thence

had petitioned *Ethelwold* to commiserate her Case, and redeem her out of such cruel Hands.

EVEN the good Offices of Statesmen are to be suspected. *Ethelwold* espoused this young Lady's Cause, as if only for the Sake of Equity and Humanity, and to convince the Public, that he accepted of Power merely to have the more enlarged Capacity of doing Good.

TAKING, therefore, the innocent Victim by the Hand, he led her to the King ; took upon him to be her Advocate, and pleaded for her, as if Charity and Generosity dwelt only in his Bosom. But Beauty, even in Silence, is eloquent beyond the Power of Words. *Wilfrede* was, at least, the second Favourite of Nature, and but gave Place to *Gertrude*, who had not her equal beneath the Sky. The King scarce heard his Favourite ; his Soul had taken Possession of his Eye, and, instead of granting a Suit, he became himself a Suppliant.

THOUGH *Wilfrede* had her Share of Pride, it did not soar so high as a Crown : To see her Sovereign at her Feet, was more than her Dreams had ever flattered her with ; and he could not be more sensible of her Beauty, than she of the Honour of such a Conquest. The Soil was, therefore,

fore, proper for the Plant, and *Ethelwold* had soon the Pleasure to see it bear such Fruits as he desired.

HAVING thus effectually cured the King, of his Curiosity, with Regard to *Gertrude*, his next Step was, to renew his Jealousy of the Earl her Father ; by remonstrating, that he had good Grounds to suspect, that he was then carrying on a secret Correspondence with the Duke of *Normandy*, which in Time, might prove dangerous to the *English* Crown ; and suggesting at the same Time, that the surest Method of bridling his Ambition, would be to dispose of his Daughter in Marriage, to some one of his Servants, of try'd Integrity ; since thereby she would become a Hostage for his good Behaviour.

THE credulous King still believed his Favourite to be all Wisdom and Fidelity ; and, therefore, not only approved the Advice, but pressed him in the most earnest Manner, to be himself the Man ; since on his Integrity he depended most. But tho' this was the very Thing, which *Ethelwold* drove at. He had too much Artifice to betray the least Glimpse of that Pleasure which he took in the Proposal : On the contrary, he created Difficulties, raised Scruples, and submitted at last, with the Air of one who made himself a Sacrifice, for the Security

of his Master, and the Repose of his Kingdom.

HIS Plot being now perfect, with a pensive Look, but a glad Heart, he took his Leave of the King, and set out for *Devon*, where he arrived all Transport, made a Merit of the pretended Difficulties he had met with in making the Earl's Peace, and challeng'd *Gertrude* for his Reward ; which in a few Days, she became ; the Earl chearfully ratifying his former Agreement, and the Lady making no Difficulty to receive for a Husband, the second Man in the Kingdom, as being still ignorant that he had robbed her of the First.

TIME that he thought lame before, seem'd now to have double Wings : Many happy Weeks had flown away in Raptures ; and he found himself, at unawares, obliged to make Love give Place to Ambition : no Body knowing better than he, how difficult it was, without constant Attendance, to preserve Court-Favour.

WHEN, therefore, the utmost Day of the Term allotted him was in Sight, he gave his Bride to understand, that his Duty call'd, and she must, for a Season, give him Leave to obey it ; which she readily agreed to, but on such a Condition, as almost carried Death along with it.

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Gertrude, though Lady of the Soil, and treated by all in a Manner as the Queen of the Province where she liv'd, had look'd upon herself hitherto, as most unfortunate, because unacquainted with the Gaieties of a Court ; and she had given into this Marriage, principally to take Leave of a Country-Life, and to cloy herself with those Poms and Splendours, which she thought nobody had a better Right to than herself.

HER Husband's Return was then the very Opportunity she waited for : and when he endeavoured to soften it, by expressing the Necessity which obliged him to leave her, and the Agonies it gave him, she cut him short with a Declaration — That she would bear him Company. — Her Vanity, however, she had the Address to conceal. — Her Love, her Tenderness were the only Motives that appeared, and the utter Impossibility of enduring Life without him.

HITHERTO *Ethelwold's* Treachery had been attended with nothing but Success, Triumph and Happiness : But this untoward Incident spread a Damp over all. The very Appearance of *Gertrude*, he knew, would give the Lye to every Feature of the fantastic Picture he had drawn of her ; and the King, he foresaw, would think him-
self

self authorized to proceed to any Violence whatever.

THUNDERSTRUCK, therefore, with a Reply so unexpected, *Ethelwold* stood fix'd like a Statue, speechless with Perplexity, and weighing within himself, whether he should sacrifice his Love to his Ambition, or his Ambition to his Love ; for to preserve both, seemed impossible.

THAT, however, he might leave no Expedient untried, he made Use of every plausible Argument which his Invention could furnish him with, to induce her to change her Purpose, and to continue still at her Father's Seat, 'till the King's Service would again permit him to have the Pleasure of her sweet Society.

BUT his Endeavours were entirely fruitless : Her Heart was set upon going, and she was pre-determined to carry her Point, cost what it would. With the peculiar Artifice, therefore, that fine Women are seldom at a Loss for, she touched him to the Quick with the most pointed Reproaches ; charg'd him with Inconstancy, Indifference, or Contempt : Ask'd him, whether he was asham'd of his Choice ? Whether he was sick of her Fondness ? Whether Absence was to be his Cure ? And a broken Heart hers ?—— To all this, she added Tears, Swoonings, Blandishments,

Blandishments ; and whatever real Passion feels, or Falshood feigns : infomuch, that *Ethelwold* finding himself equally incapable of parting with his Power or his Wife, made the Truth his last Subterfuge ; told her all with an Ingenuity that he had never practised before, and which nothing but the most cruel Necessity could have reduced him to now ; pleaded the Excess of his Passion as an Excuse for his Infidelity, and endeavoured to disarm her Resentment, by piquing her upon her Generosity.

Gertrude listened to this unexpected Discovery with the most profound Attention ; and, though every Word was a Dagger to her Heart, never dropp'd a Syllable which might betray her keen Sense of her Husband's Imposture ; nor, for some Moments after he had done speaking, did she suffer a Look to explain what passed in her Bosom. At length, however, like one whose Thoughts, after a long Excursion, were come home, she coldly signified, that she no longer wondered at his Desire to leave her behind, and that she should comply with it, in Compliment to his Repose.

Ethelwold fell at her Feet in a Transport of Acknowledgment, called her his Guardian - Angel, and vow'd he would
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live and die her Slave : Soon after which he set out for *London*, with all the Tranquillity of a Man, who finds himself not only safe ashore, after a Tempest, but in the secure Possession of all the Treasure which the Waves had just threatened to devour.

BUT it was not so with *Gertrude*. Her Thoughts and Dreams were now continually haunted with Thrones, Sceptres, Crowns, and all the dazzling Splendors they are surrounded with. To have been the Elect of a King, made her look down with Disdain upon his Favourite : To have been trick'd out of the Royalty that was prepared for her, made her no longer think of him as her Husband, but her Enemy. The Court she had so passionately desired to visit, seemed now to resemble those gawdy Clouds which we admire at a Distance, but can never approach. Her Father's Castle she looked upon as her Prison, from whence she was never to remove ; and in that afflicting Consideration, every object round about it, inspir'd her with Disgust and Abhorrence.

IT happened, that, while she was in the midst of this thorough Discontent, a foreign Painter, who was employed by a certain Prince to furnish him with the
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Portraits of the most celebrated Beauties of *Europe*, came to wait upon the Earl her Father, with an earnest Request, that, in Compliment to the Prince his Master, he would have the Goodness to influence the Lady *Gertrude* to sit to him for her Picture; without which, he politely insinuated, his Collection would be esteemed of no Value.

THE Earl was touched with the Compliment (for his Daughter's Beauty afforded almost as much Food to his Vanity, as her's) and with the utmost Readiness undertook to answer for her Compliance.

NOR, indeed, did he find any Difficulty in obtaining it. It was a Circumstance that perfectly agreed with her present Views, and she resolved to improve it to the utmost. Accordingly, she called out every Charm, and every Grace, and borrowed besides, all the Advantages of Dress and Decoration. The Painter believed that *Venus* herself was before him, and, inspired with that Imagination, as much excell'd himself in his Performance, as *Gertrude* excell'd all other Women. Even she, who, by the frequent Assistance of her Glass, had every Feature, Line, and Touch by Heart, and did not fail to see all in the most favourable Light, could not help acknowledging, That he had done her Justice (which, from a consummate Beauty, is to be understood as
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the highest Praise.) But such a Hand as yours, continued she, ought not to be confined to Solitudes like ours. The Court is the Element of Beauty ; 'tis there only, you can hope to be furnished with a Subject for a Master-piece. — Let me advise you, therefore, to repair thither without Delay, and by displaying the Wonders you have already performed, open to yourself Opportunities, of performing still greater.

THE Painter gladly embraced the Hint, and *Gertrude* maliciously took upon her to furnish him with such Recommendations, as should make his Way easy to every Lady who was within the Reach of his Commission : But, though her Pretensions were to pay a Compliment to the Artist, her real Design was to make him unwittingly the Tool of her Ambition and Revenge.

THE King's Curiosity, she believed, would immediately kindle, on hearing a Painter was in his Court upon such an Errand ; and its first Impulse, it was natural to think, would be, to take a Review of those Beauties, which had already done Honour to his Pencil : On which Occasion she made no Difficulty to flatter herself, that the Superiority of her Charms, would not only be made manifest, but her Husband's Treachery likewise ; and that without
giving

giving the least Suspicion that she was any way instrumental to the Discovery.

NOR was she mistaken in her Conjectures. The Painter's Story, by her Management, became soon the Talk of the Court; and the King was one of the first to fall into the Snare. The Painter innocently spread his Pieces before the King; but, as the most finish'd Beauty, reserved *Gertrude's* for the last.

As upon all other Occasions, so, the Judgment of *Ethelwold* was now likewise appeal'd to, upon every Portrait which was presented to their Consideration; and he diverted the whole Court with his Pleasantries, as each, in Turn, afforded Hints to his frolick Imagination. But when that of *Gertrude* appeared, his Wit and Humour fail'd him all at once; he stood like one Thunder-struck, pale, trembling, and alike incapable to express or conceal his Agony: The Resemblance was too happily taken, to leave in him the least Doubt about the Original, and therefore seemed to threaten him with all the Mischiefs, which he had used such Precaution to guard against. Every body, but the King, discerned this sudden Change in him, and wondered what could be the Cause. But he was fastened by the Eyes to the beautiful Object before

fore him, and had no Leisure to attend to any Thing else.—What a Miracle! What a Prodigy! What a Goddess! At last he found Words to say, — But this is the Painter's Creation: Nature is not capable of such a Production; nor was *Eve* herself such an Assemblage of Charms.

No, my Liege, answered *Ethelwold*, (artfully stopping the Painter's Mouth, which was already open to speak) it is not wholly the Painter's Creation. My Wife gave him the Hint; but he has improved it to Admiration. She has, indeed, such a Complexion and such Features; but he has given them the Harmony they wanted; and expressed what she is said to be, not what she is: Whence I gather, that his whole Collection is of a Piece, and Flattery has a greater Share in it than Truth.

THE Painter was confounded at a Discourse so wide of the Fact itself, since he well knew that, where Nature hath done her best, it is not in the Power of Art to do Justice, much less improve: Believing, nevertheless, that the Favourite had some weighty Reasons for what he had said, which it might be dangerous for him to dispute, he seemed to allow by his Silence, what he durst not attempt to explode.

BUT

BUT, notwithstanding the Artifice of the Husband, or the Address of the Painter, the King chose, for once, to be governed by his own Eyes, and insisted upon comparing the Picture with the Original.

THIS was the very Danger which *Ethelwold* dreaded above all others. He, therefore, had Recourse to every Expedient in his Power to divert it ; pleaded an invincible Attachment in his Wife to a Country - Life, and such an insuperable Aversion to Courts, that she had even stipulated in her Marriage-Articles, never to be removed thither on any Pretence whatever.

It shall be our Pleasure, then, to wait upon her, said the King. Were I Sovereign-Lord of all *Europe*, she would deserve the Compliment ; nor should I hesitate a Moment to pay it.

BUT the Business of the State interrupted *Ethelwold* ——— Shall wait my Return, replied the King. All other Concerns are but Trifles to this ; nor would I forego my Intention, to preserve my Crown.

A Determination so peremptory would admit of no longer Dispute : *Ethelwold*, therefore, gave Way to his Master's Pleasure, and, by way of Favour, entreated

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only

only that he might be allowed to set out first, in order to make the necessary Preparations for his Reception.

THIS, though with some Difficulty, was granted, and *Ethelwold*, more than half in Despair, began his Journey ; pondering his own Infidelities, the Vengeance that hung over him, and what dextrous Expedient might yet be put in Practice to avoid it. To resign his Wife, he persuaded himself might procure his Pardon ; but then Life, without her, he considered as a Thing of no Value.

BESET, therefore, with Mischiefs, and totally unresolved after what Manner to extricate himself, upon his Arrival he took the first Opportunity to throw himself at his Wife's Feet ; again acknowledged the Injury he had done her, but pleaded the Violence of his Passion, as the only Cause ; besought her, therefore, to consider him now as her Husband, not as one who had been her Enemy ; acquainted her with the fatal Incident of 'the Picture, and the dreadful Effects it was like to produce ; declared his Life and Fortunes were in her Hands, and that she might either save or destroy him at her Pleasure ; hinted, that, by feigning herself sick, or pleading a Devotional Vow, or setting out on some Pilgrimage, or by
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taking Sanctuary in some Religious House, or by secreting herself in some obscure and distant Part of the Country, she might not only shield him from the Evils which threatned him, but greatly ennoble her own Character.

BUT *Gertrude's* Heart was too full of the Success of her own Stratagem, and the tempting Consequences she expected from it, to give Ear to any of these Proposals: On the contrary, she signified that no Place was secure from the Power of the King; that to incense him yet farther, she thought a very unlikely Project to ward off his Vengeance for the Offence already committed, and that the likeliest way to make his Peace, would be to make a full Confession of his Fault, and throw himself upon the King's Mercy.

To find he had so little Interest in his Wife, was a new Embarrassment to the Earl. Rising, therefore, from the Ground, with a distracted Air, as a last Request, he conjured her, only not to study her Dress, or point her Conversation, or blast him with the Sight of any Endeavour on her Side, to charm a Man already but too sensible of her Perfections.

BUT even in this, he talked to the deaf Adder. The King came; and, as if she took a malicious Pleasure in contradicting her Lord, *Gertrude* appear'd before his Majesty,

all Magnificence, as well as all Beauty. No Embellishment was wanting, no Snare was unthought of, no Charm or Grace was unimproved: The very Day itself seem to break from her Eye, and blush upon her Cheek. The King stood dumb and motionless before her, as her Husband had done formerly ; and found Majesty no Match for Beauty.

To the Wonders of her Person, she likewise added all the Poignancy of her Wit, and all the Ornaments of Address and good Breeding ; insomuch, that the King gazed upon her with Ecstasy, heard her with Ravishment, and publicly avowed, that, of all her Sex, she only was worthy a Crown.

NOR did he stop here, but, looking with Scorn and Indignation on *Ethelwold*, gave him to understand, that he now saw into the whole Depth of his Villany ; and that to the Laws of Hospitality only, he owed his Preservation: Upbraided him publicly with his Breach of Trust ; open'd the whole Secret both to the Lady and her Father, whom he invited to Court upon his own Terms, and before her Husband's Face, woo'd *Gertrude* to quit so unworthy a Husband, and bear the Earl Company ; assuring her, it should still be her own Fault,

Fault, if she did not share with him in his Crown.

THIS being the very Point which the Ambition of *Gertrude* aimed at, it is not to be wonder'd, that she declined it but coldly, and that, in the End, she suffered herself to be over-ruled.

GROWN desperate with the Oppression of so many Sorrows, *Ethelwold* now threw off all Respect, and, whether justly or unjustly obtained, insisted on the Rights of a Husband ; call'd upon Heaven and Earth to take part with him, and vainly vowed to be the Death of any Man whatever, who should dare to deprive him of his Wife.

BUT Law and Equity are of little Weight, where Force is supreme. The King's Command, the Lady's Consent, and the Earl her Father's Countenance, seem'd to give a Sort of Allowance to the Rape, and the unfortunate *Ethelwold* beheld himself undone, both in his Love and Ambition, at a Blow.

IT is, perhaps, needless to trace this History any farther. The Will of Sovereigns is generally admitted as a Law : That therefore, *Ethelwold* should, soon after this Event, fall into a languishing Disease, which most conveniently removed him out of the Way ; that *Wilfrede*, the King's Mistress, should be forced into a Nunnery,

an involuntary Penitent, there to consume the rest of her Days; and that *Gertrude* should, at last, find herself in Possession of a Throne, are so obvious to the Imagination, that they scarce need a Recital.

THE El—— is here ended her History; and the Princess being now greatly recovered, and the Duke and Duchess of Z—— arrived at H——, to repay the late Visit from thence; the illustrious Company set out on their Return to Court; where the Princess had once again the Pleasure to find herself in the Arms of those, whose Expressions of Friendship and Affection she knew to be sincere.

UPON this double Occasion, of the Recovery of the Princess, and the Arrival of the Duke and Duchess, the El——l Prince had the Gallantry to entertain both Courts with a Ball; which, as usual upon such Occasions, the Nobility of both Sexes, by the Splendour of their Appearance, endeavoured to render as magnificent as possible; particularly Count K——rk, distinguished himself in so remarkable a Manner, that, like the principal Figure in a judicious Painting, he attracted all Eyes, and, in every Heart, excited either Envy or Admiration.

EVERY body knows, that the Talk of the Circle seldom turns either on Politics or Philosophy,

losophy, or any of those abstruse or critical Points which amuse the Learned World: Dress, Figure, Characters, Hints of Scandal, with the necessary Flatteries of the Day, on the contrary, make up the whole System of Courtiers, which they take Care to manage as frugally as possible, for fear of being run a-ground. In particular, those who have the Royal Ear, and can furnish out no better Amusement, select the most conspicuous Figures from the Herd, which they immediately run down, pull to pieces, and serve up as Royal Entertainment.

OF this kind of Sport, no Person was so fond as the Countess of Pl—n; but then, she followed it rather to tickle her own Spleen, than to flatter any body's else: And thus had she paid her Court to the El—s for an Hour together; when, upon the Appearance of Count K—n—rk, she changed her Manner all at once; and, taking the Hint from his Dress, extoll'd that much, his Person more, and spoke of his Accomplishments, as scarce to be parallel'd. In this Interval, the Count advancing into the Circle, in order to make his Complements, the El—s, in a drolling way, told him aloud, that the Countess had been displaying her Talent at his Expence, and advised him to lose no Opportunity of taking his Revenge.

A Turn at once so unexpected, and so contrary to her real Sentiments, not a little disconcerted the Countess, who could not help betraying, by her Manner at least, that she did not desire to have the Count for her Enemy. But neither had she Time to undeceive him, nor he to make a proper Reply; for at that Moment, the El——r and the Duke of Z—— entered the Room, and Complements on all Sides, engrossed the Conversation; which being exhausted, the Scene was next changed to the Apartment of the Princess; where the illustrious Company divided into Parties, in order to set down to Cards: But the Countess excusing herself, the El——r did the same; for, having observed her to look ruffled, and uneasy, he could not rest 'till he had enquired the Cause, and received repeated Assurances, that a slight Head-ach was her only Complaint, which she made no doubt to get rid of before Morning: But, though eas'd in part of his Concern by this Declaration, he continued to enlarge on his Apprehensions notwithstanding; which, at present, she would very gladly have excused, as being more disposed to come to an Explanation with the Count, than to entertain the Caresses of his Highness,

SHE was, however, at last relieved, by the Company's rising up, in order to remove to the Banquet, which was spread in the adjacent Apartments, and to which the Ceremonial required, that the El——r should lead the Duchess of Z——, the Duke the El——fs; and consequently nobody could stir a Step, 'till he had lead the Way.

BUT though she was deliver'd from the obsequious El——r, it was not her Lot to make an Offer of her Hand to the Count as she designed; his Highness having given her in Charge to Prince *Charles* as an Invalid, who it would become him to be particularly careful of.

THE Ball, however, which began after Supper, favoured her with the Opportunity she so much sought and desir'd; for the El——al Prince having opened it with the Princess his Consort, it fell to her Lot to be led out next by Prince *Charles*, who having gone through one Minuet with the Princess, was, according to Custom, to sit down at the End of the second, and leave his Partner to make her Choice likewise, which, as may be easily conceived, fell without Hesitation upon K——rk, who, fully believing what the El——fs had said, to be Matter of Fact, was not a little surprized at so unexpected a Compliment;

ment: Being, however, a well-bred Man, and devoted to the Service of the Ladies, he could not help receiving her Hand as a Favour, and expressing his Acknowledgments accordingly; which the Countess returned with these few Words, which she dropp'd at once as softly, and distinctly as possible. " My Lord, I expect to see you
 " this very Night at my Apartment, as
 " soon as the Court breaks up. The El—is
 " has done me wrong."

VANITY, what gay, handsome, young, Court-Lord is free from? Our Hero was not: To be distinguished by her, who disposed of the Fate of *H——*, gave him a Pleasure he was scarce able to conceal. In short, the Princess was at that Instant forgot, and he replied with some Ardour, That she might command his Life, as well as his Obedience.

THE Assignment thus made and accepted, both Parties grew alike impatient to enjoy the Fruits of it; and, in order to render the Interval as short as possible, the Countess had no sooner ended her Dance, but she counterfeited a Return of her Indisposition; as being fully perswaded, the doating El——r would, in Tenderneſs to her, find some Pretence to curtail the Diversions of the Night, that she might be the sooner at Repose.

NOR

NOR was she mistaken in her Conjecture: The Elector did not fail to rush into the Snare, and pleaded a sudden Disorder of his own, to facilitate her Recovery. The Court immediately took the Alarm; the good El——s was for assembling the Physicians; and all the Officious expressed a Sorrow they did not feel, and offered Services which were of no use. But the El——r, knowing his own Disease best, for this once rescued himself from the Mischiefs he was threatened with, and absolutely refused all Remedies but Repose.

THUS obligingly favoured by the very Person who was most concerned to disappoint the Meeting, the Count was enabled to repair to the Place appointed, sooner than he could have hoped for, and the Lady to receive him; who, having as many Passions to indulge, had to the full as much Impatience as he.

OF all the young Nobility about the Court, K——k was the most distinguished in himself, and had least distinguished her. Amus'd with his Romantic Pursuit of the Princess, whom he could never hope to obtain, he had till then overlooked such as he might, and the Countess most, as being the Person most obnoxious to her Highness.

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THERE was, therefore, a Mixture of Self-Conceit and Spleen to the Princess, as well as Affection for *K——k*, in this forward Step of the Countess's: She had neither been accustomed to Neglect, nor was of a Temper to bear it; much less could she suffer any Body else to dispute the Pre-eminence with her, or rob her of the Homage which she thought still due to her Charms, though now in their Wane.

RESOLV'D, then, to make a Convert of the Count at all Hazards, and believing Advances on her Side to be the only Way; being, likewise, of a Libertine-Turn, and thinking the Ceremonial in Love-Affairs to be most of all impertinent, she had so disposed herself on a magnificent Settee, as, at the first Entrance of the Count, might prepare him for what was to follow; as might totally efface every other Image from his Heart, and fill it with hers only.

It seems to be a Frailty entail'd upon Man, that Heaven at Distance does not attract us so forcibly, as a Fool's Paradise in Sight. *K——k* found himself a Son of *Adam* in this dangerous Interview. To see himself at once overwhelmed with the Caresses of a handsome, powerful Woman, melted down all his Constancy at once, and made him
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fit to receive what Impression she pleased.

BUT let us here draw the Curtain.— Before Day-break the Count retired, and, instead of Rest, had Leisure for such Reflections as alternately produced Pleasure and Pain. That he had received Favours from such a Woman as the Countess of P——, he could not be sorry for ; that he should submit to be a second Time, so obliged, if so tempted, he saw no Reason to doubt ; but to make the Trust and Confidence of the Princess the Price, he thought was buying Gold too dear.

HERE, therefore, began his Perplexity ; for his Ambition prompted him to keep well with both, and till some such happy Expedient occur'd, he felt himself incapable of Repose. Concluding at last, however, that his Visits to the Countess could not be concealed from her Highness, he came to a Resolution of carrying the News himself.

ACCORDINGLY, towards Noon, he attended her Levee, when those who deign'd to countenance her little Circle, came to pay their Compliments of Course, and was soon distinguished in so thin an Assembly.

THE Princess had for some Time been in close Conversation with the Baroness de M——lk, and could not help betraying in
her

her Countenance some Signs of Chagrin, which the Count interpreted at first he had some Concern in. But she had the Goodness to put him soon out of his Pain, by giving him a Sign to approach, and frankly letting him into the Cause. Count, said she, you find me this Morning more sensible of my wretched Condition than ever. I have made no Secret of any Thing to the Duke and Duchess; and, instead of Comfort, receive only the hard Lessons of Patience, Submission, and Resignation. Finding my Health restored, they seem under little Concern for my Quiet. To-Morrow they take their Leave; and even the poor Pleasure of bearing them Company is denied me. The Count *de Pl—n* has found out that Travelling is chargeable. But why do I complain to you of his Oeconomy? You are in his Interest, at least in his Wife's,—and my Confidence may now ruin your Fortune.

MAY Dishonour seize me! interrupted the Count, as touched to the quick with this keen Reproach, if ever I forego your Highness's Service for any Interest whatever. It is true, she took it in her Head to distinguish me last Night, and I thought myself obliged to acknowledge it: But rather than this, or any other light Circumstance, should bring me into Suspicion
with

with your Highness, I would turn my Back upon her for ever.

No, by no Means, Count, replied the Princess: I desire no such Sacrifice, nor have I any Pretence to justify such a Desire. Converse with whom you will, I am persuaded you can never cease to be my Friend; and, till you do, you can never forfeit my Favour: The Woman has Power, and under your Influence it may perhaps do me the less Mischief.

K——k was going to reply, with yet more Passion, when the Princess laid her Hand upon her Mouth; and immediately taking Leave of her little Circle, retired to her Closet.

THE Count was now in a Circumstance that most young Men of Fashion might envy; in the Confidence of one great Lady, in the Bosom of another, and in the Esteem of all: But Fortune was at this very Instant preparing to mortify him after a peculiar Manner; that is to say, by an Accumulation of her Favours.

PRINCE *Charles*, who was as much attached to Glory, as K——k to Love, had, during this Interval, obtained the El——r's Leave to serve in the Imperial Army against the *Turks*; and believing his Friend had the like Ambition, procured him the like Honour. When, therefore,
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the Count was in the Height of Self-Congratulation, on having so happily reconciled the Favour of Madam *de P—n* with his Interest in the Princess, he found himself oppress'd with this new and unlook'd for Benefit ; which, though it remov'd him from all the Joys which either Grandeur or Luxury could bestow, challeng'd the most chearful Acceptance, and most profound Acknowledgments.

ACCORDINGLY in Compliance with the Tyranny of Custom, *K——k* put on all the Hero, and expressed himself to his over-officious Friend, as if he had obliged him in the most sensible Manner : as if Life was to be least enjoy'd in the Jaws of Death ; as if Glory was his only Mistress.

BUT when their Field-Equipages was ready, and the Day of Departure drew near, in Spite of himself his Heart recoiled, his Countenance fell, and a Cloud of Concern over-spread his Brow : Justly afraid, therefore, of the last tender Moments, and the ill Consequences which any fatal Escape might occasion, he begged the Baroness *de M——lk* to introduce him to the Closet of the Princess ; where falling upon his Knee, and endeavouring to speak, his Voice forsook him, and he only
fix'd

fix'd his Eyes upon the Princess, without speaking a Word.

A Behaviour so passionate, an Aspect so disordered, her Highness could neither over-look, nor be insensible of: But recollecting herself in a Moment, put an End to their mutual Embarrassment, by giving him her Hand to kiss, and saying at the same Time,—Count, you are going when I stood most in Need of your Services. — Take Care of your Life, therefore, I charge you.—Think I have an Interest in its Preservation; and that, if you die, I despair.—My Enemies, I foresee, will make my Load greater than I can bear; and it is by your Help only that I look for Deliverance.

IF the Count was overwhelm'd with Grief before, he became now altogether as much transported with Joy; and, rising from the Ground, as if all Air and Spirit, expressed himself like one inspired; — declaring she had done him more Honour than a Triumph: — That a Wish of hers would bring him from the remotest Corner of the Earth to her Feet: — That every Faculty of his Soul was at her Devotion; and that, even to the last Gasps, he would obey her.

THE Princess smil'd at his Extravagance; — gave him her Hand once more to

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kiss,

kiss, and sighing out *Poor Count !* made him a Sign to withdraw ; which he did immediately, reconcil'd to his Expedition ; since it had been the Means of procuring such a Declaration in his Favour.

BUT, though he had thus settled with the Princess, his Debts of Love were not wholly discharged: Madam *de P*— had still her Claims, and waited with Impatience to have them satisfied ; nor, in Spite of his Attachment to her Highness, could he prevail with himself to set out without making her those Acknowledgments, which he thought both Gallantry and Gratitude required.

'TIS a receiv'd Opinion, that to have a Tenderneſs for Two at once is impossible ; but nothing is more easy than to explode it : And this one Fact is sufficient to shew, that, to a certain Degree, Love, as well as Favour, is of different Kinds, and consequently may be extended at the same Time to different Objects. *K*——*k* admired the Princess as an Angel, but he caressed Madam *de Pl*——*n* as a Woman. If the first excited any turbulent Passions, the last qualified them again : To the one, he devoted his Heart ; to the other, his Soul : That he desired ; and this he adored.

MIDNIGHT, as usual, was the Time appointed by the Countess for this parting Interview ; which was all Passion on her Side, and Acknowledgment on his. The present Fair-One was Lady of the Ascendant, and the other, for the Time being, forgot. If the romantic Bravery of Prince *Charles*, who so officiously sought out Danger as the only Way to purchase Glory, was mentioned with some Bitterness by the Countess, *K——k* thought the Complaint so obliging, that the Hero gave Way to the Lover, and he almost confessed, that the Honour bestowed on him, was purchased rather too dearly. At parting, the Lady melted into Tears ; the Count expressed himself extremely sensible of her Tenderness, and vow'd to hold her Favours in eternal Remembrance.

THE next Morning both the Prince and he took a public Leave of the Court, and set out for *Hungary* ; soon after which arrived the important News that the *Pa——t* of *E——d*, at the Instance, and by the Management of *K. W.* had opened a Way for the House of *H——r* to succeed to that Crown, in case the Princess of *D———* died without Issue.

As never any Incident of the like Moment had befall this Court, so never any was celebrated with the like Rejoycings: Not only the El——l Family, but the Nobility, and even the Burghers and Peasants behaving on this Occasion, as if, like *Moses*, they had already a Sight of the Promis'd Land from off the Top of *Pisgah*.

BUT one melancholy Face was to be seen in all *H——r*, and that was the Princess's; who, not being treated as one of the Family, saw no Reason to join in the general Joy; and so little Pains did she take to dissemble the real Sentiments of her Heart, that the El——fs, who thought it little less than Treason, not to be transported at a Piece of News which reflected such Lustre upon her Posterity, could not help upbraiding her upon the Occasion, as one Insensible of her own Good, and guilty of little less than Insolence, in affecting an Indifference towards a Crown, which even in her very Dreams she could hardly have aspired to. She added, that what she seemed so much to undervalue, she did not deserve to enjoy; more especially, as the Advancement in Prospect was not only so considerable, but in all Probability so nearly approaching, *K. W.* being already on the Decline,

cline, a Widower and childless, and the Princess unlikely to have any more, and then a Mourner over her last.

THE El——s did not chide thus warmly with the Princess merely from a Principle of Family-Zeal, or Gratitude to the E——*sh* People; but because she fancy'd the Coldness of the Princess was a Reflection upon her own ungovernable Transports: For, stricken in Years as she was, such an ambitious Fondness did she foster in her Bosom of yet Queening it in E—— herself, that she sent Dr. S———*t* to E———*d*, on no other Errand, than to make Observations on the Princess's Habit of Body, from thence to calculate how long she might probably live, and what Hopes and Fears might be entertained as to the Article of Child-birth.

THE Princess, in general, urged her own unambitious Temper, in Excuse for the Faults imputed to her by her El———*l* Highness; but did not fail to insinuate withal, that her Sense of Things was too insignificant to deserve Notice: That as she was treated now, she should expect to be treated always; consequently an Increase of Grandeur, would only be an Increase of Misery: That the Crown of E——*d* she (the E——s) seemed to set such a Value upon, had proved but a Crown of Thorns

to most of the Princes that had worn it ; and that Sovereigns by Election, as well as by Inheritance, might find it to be the same.

PLEASURE and Pain are the Night and Day of Life, and succeed one another as duly. Thus the Jubilee held at *H——r*, on this grand Occasion, was no sooner over, but News came, that in a Battel with the *Turks*, Prince *Charles* was killed ; and that it was believed Count *K———k* having shar'd in his Danger, had shar'd in his Fate.

THE Loss of the first was mourned by the whole Court indifferently ; for his amiable Manners had rendered him dear to all ; and even *K———k* had the Honour to be deplored, not only by Madam *de Pl———n*, but by the Princess herself, who could not help sacrificing of a few Tears, to the Memory of one who had been her Companion from her Infancy.

BUT they were soon wip'd away : The Report of his Death was ill-grounded ; and the next Advices from *Vienna* brought Word, that he was not only safe and well, but on his Return to *H——r* ; where he accordingly arrived, and met with such a Reception as his gallant Behaviour had deserved ; especially, from the Princess, who thought it one of the Favours of Providence

vidence to have her only Friend restor'd, when she had given him over, and when his Council and Services were likely to be more useful to her than ever.

THE El———l Prince had, for some Time, not only deserted her entirely, but corresponded with his Mistress openly ; of which her Highness not only complained both to the El——r and El——s, though without Effect, but enlarged upon the Affront offered to her in pretty severe Terms to the Prince himself ; who, instead of using the least Address to mollify her, gave into such a Transport of Rage, that, utterly forgetting both her Sex and Quality, he * * * * *
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The whole Palace immediately took the Alarm, and every Body that durst, rush'd in to prevent further Mischief: Notwithstanding which, the Prince was so lost in Passion, that he made no Scruple to avow publicly, That from henceforward she was to consider him as her mortal Enemy : But his Threats were not heard by her they were addressed to: Grief

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and

† It is not for want of Materials, that this Chapter is not filled up: ——— But every Fact in the Original will not bear a Translation.

and Terror had oppress'd her so strongly, that she fainted in the Arms of those who had come in to her Relief; and in that Condition was removed to her Apartment.

SHE was yet in the terrible Disorder of Mind which this ugly Incident had brought upon her, when *K———k* returned from *Hungary*; and it was, therefore, with a particular Pleasure, that she received his first Complements. A trusty Friend, is the Balm of a hurt Mind : The Count, above all others, she confided in : Her Heart was full; and to him it naturally, though indiscreetly, overflow'd.

IN short, from her own Mouth he had the Satisfaction to be informed of every particular which had happened during his Absence : Nor did she give vent to her Compliments only, but talk'd of a Remedy, and entered into a serious Consultation how it might be obtain'd.

BUT this was no easy Task : Obstacles arose on every Side ; so many, indeed, that the bare talking of it, seem'd to be all that was in their Power.

THERE was, however, something so agreeable to both, in these flattering Conversations, that they were often renewed ; and as all Transactions in Courts, which are not as manifest as Sunshine, raise Jealousies, and

and partake of the Air of a Cabal, it was soon observ'd, That the Count, who used formerly to visit the Princess, under the Umbrage of Prince *Charles*, was now received in his own Right, and paid his Court more assiduously than ever.

To Madam *de P—*'s Ears, these Whispers first found their Way (for Spies never make their Court so successfully to Favourites, as by propagating Mischief) and left her possessed with a Fury, she could neither lay nor tame: More like a Lunatic than a Politician, therefore, she sent for him immediately, acquainted him with all she had heard, and added much more, in hope to surprize him into a Confession of his Guilt, and thereby secure him to herself, by having him at her Mercy.

BUT the Falshoods he was charged with, enabled the Count so effectually to discredit the Truth, that all her Suspicions were removed at once; and she became as ready to punish those who had abused her Credulity, as she had before appeared to reward them.

THIS Calm, however, lasted but for a very short Season. The Count's ill Stars led him to invite the whole Court to a grand Entertainment, which he artfully gave Madam *de Pi—* to understand, was principally meant as a Compliment to her: Resolved, therefore,

therefore, not to be out-done in Gallantry, she came to it, adorned with all the Finery which the El—r's Treasury could furnish: and the Princess, on her Side, foreknowing who she was to vie with, most unfortunately distinguished herself that Day, with all the Ornaments she had, for a long while, neglected before. She no sooner, therefore, made her Appearance, but Madam *de Pl--n's* Jealousy took Fire again: She thought her that Day too handsome, as well as too fine: She thought *K—* too assiduous in paying his Court to her; and she thought her Highness too well pleased with it: In a Word, her Displeasure and Resentment were visible in her Eyes; and, when the Count snatched an Opportunity to come to an Explanation with her, she repulsed him almost with Rudeness, and haughtily bid him return to *his* Princess, who would entertain him more to his Satisfaction: Notwithstanding which rough Treatment, when the Assembly was broke up, he waited upon her at Home; and, by giving a dextrous Turn to every Thing that had pass'd, as well as redoubling his Caresses, once again found means to make his Peace.

WARN'D, however, by the Experience of that Day, and what had happened before, he wisely resolved to wait upon the Princess only on set Days, and in public; notwith-

notwithstanding which Precaution, the Countess, not only persever'd in her Jealousy, but even took upon her to call in Question the Conduct of her Highness, though so notoriously difficient in her own.

BUT, though her Malice and Presumption were soon reported to the Prince's, she took no other Revenge, than to say, with some Bitterness, ' I excuse her: She ' has long since fallen out with Innocence, ' and a Reconciliation is impossible'.

THE Sore are easily hurt; this Reproach was echoed to the Ear of Madam *de Pl—*, who, from that Moment, resolved to be satisfied with nothing less than the Prince's Ruin: For the first Step towards which, she sent for the Count, and required of him, as a Proof of his Integrity with Respect to the Prince's, and of his Attachment to her, that he would marry the Lady —, her own Daughter by the El——r; which he refusing with some Horror, for Reasons which he had too much Delicacy to explain, she flew into a most indecent Passion, declaired him unworthy of the Favours he had received, and the Honour he had refused; and bid him never attempt to see her more; for her Doors should now be shut against him for ever.

K—— bowed, and retired: And the Countess immediately hied her to Court; and, having easily obtained a private Audience, made no Conscience to charge a criminal Correspondence upon the Princess and the Count; pleaded a Concern for the Honour of the El——l Family, and took upon herself to make good her Charge; provided no Use was made of her Intelligence, to put the two Lovers upon their Guard. The El——r, though astonished at a Thing so little suspected, promised to keep the Secret inviolably, 'till every Circumstance was ripe for an Eclaircissement. The Countess then resumed her Tale; enforced every Particular, with all the Subtlety in her Power; and rivetted all, by informing him, that she had offered her Daughter in Marriage to the Count, as a Snare to come at the Truth; since it was manifest, he would gladly accept an Offer which so eminently flattered his Interest; if some secret Consideration did not impel him to refuse it.

NOR did her Malice terminate here; for by the Means of her Sister, she stirred up the same Suspicions in the Mind of the El——l Prince; who was not ill-pleased to be furnished with an Excuse for his savage Manner of treating a Princess whom all the rest of Mankind admired.

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IN the mean while, though the Princess had sufficient Reason to apprehend some Mischief might be the Result of a Report, which aimed at no less than her utter Ruin ; she thought herself so safe in her Innocence, and had such a Contempt for her Enemy, that she scorn'd to make the least Alteration in her Conduct ; but received *K—k* as usual ; nay, affected rather to distinguish him more, as if in Defiance of all that could be urg'd against her.

THIS Procedure of hers, however gallant, was nevertheless imprudent, since it furnished daily Means to Madam *de Pl—*, to add Strength and Colour to her Calumnies ; 'till Prejudice at last began to have the Force of Truth. The *El—r* altered his Manner towards her, from Coldness into Contempt ; the *El—*ess, instead of treating her with an affected Civility, almost over-looked her ; and the Prince her Consort, put on the downright Barbarian, and disdain'd the least Mixture of Softness or Goodness, by way of Palliation.

THUS beset with Insults and Affronts, the unhappy Princess thought of retiring to *Z—*, there to spend the Remainder of her Days ; in order to which, she besought the *El—r's* Leave, to make a Visit to her Father and Mother, and by the Intercession

tercession of the El—fs, made a Shift to obtain it.

BUT her Project, like most other, by no means answered her Expectations: Though she was received with great Indulgence and Affection by her Parents, when she came to explain the true Grounds of her Journey, and laid before them her earnest Request, to be received into their Protection, and to reside at Z—— for good and all; the Duke her Father, apprehending such a Step might breed a Misunderstanding between the two Courts, consulted *B—rnsd—ff* upon the Motion; who, taking Time to deliberate before he would deliver his Opinion, dispatch'd a Courier to the El——r with the News, requiring to know his Pleasure therein; who likewise consulted *Madam de Pl—*, as his Oracle: And she, thinking it too great a Grace to an Enemy, to have Leave to remain out of her Reach, insisted on the Negative; and supported her Opinion with so many political Reasons, with Regard to the Succession of the Duchy, that the El—r came into her Opinion without Reserve, and furnished *B—r—nds—ff* with Instructions accordingly; who then became clearly of Opinion, That if the Duke gave the least Countenance to the Princess, in her Project to live separate from
from

from her Husband, it would infallibly create a Rupture with *H——r*: all the mischievous Effects of which, could neither, perhaps, be foreseen now, nor prevented ever.

It hath been already observed, that nothing was so dear to the Duke, as his Repose; when, therefore, that of his Daughter interfered, he scarce thought it worthy a second Consideration. — She was married, he told her, and his Authority would be of no Force against that of the Prince her Husband: Nor could either her Prayers or Tears, or those of the Duchess her Mother in Conjunction, prevent him from sending her back to *H——r*, there to live exposed as before, to all the Neglects and Insults she had besought him to redeem her from.

As Madam *de Pl——* had taken Care that her Transactions at *Z——* should be no Secret to the Prince her Consort, he received her like an Impotent Enemy, who had aimed at Vengeance, without being able to compass it; and, with a Mixture of Contempt and Indignation, gave her to understand, That, though she had failed in her Projects, he should find a Time to make her repent, her very Endeavour to put them in Execution.

THE Court of *H—r* was, at this Crisis, in no small Ferment; for Prince *M—n* second Son to the *El—r*, had strongly importun'd his Father, to bequeath him a Portion of his Dominions; and found Ways and Means to win over several of the Privy-Council to his Party; who espoused his Cause with so much Warmth, and urged so many affecting Reasons in his Behalf, that the *El—r* seemed almost on the Point of giving up his own Judgment to theirs.

ON the other Hand, the *El—l* Prince, believing himself to be greatly injured by the Motion, made Use of all his Interest and Address to disappoint the Pretensions of his Brother, and preserve the Inheritance entire to himself; which, through the good Offices of *Madam de Pl—*, he made a shift to accomplish.

BUT, though disappointed at Court, Prince *M—n* did not give over his Pursuit. Many of the Nobles of *Z—* were disgusted with *B—r—nsd—rff's* Administration, and ripe for any Change, which afforded a Prospect of taking the Power out of his Hands: To them, therefore, he applied himself, and by agreeing to their several Demands, in case he carried his Point, not only secured them in his Interest, but induced them to sign a Remonstrance

monstrance to the Court of *Vienna* ; in which they set forth, That the States of *H——* and *Z——* were never yet united under the same Prince ; that such an Union would deprive them of their most valuable Privileges ; and that, in order to prevent the Evils they apprehended, it was their humble Request, that the Succession might devolve to Prince *M——n* ; whereby the Sovereignty of *Z——* would still be continued in the House of *L——gh*, and they should retain their antient Independancy notwithstanding.

HE likewise sent the Chevalier *K——*, one of his most trusty Partizans, to *Rome*, with a Commission to solícite his Holiness to employ his Interest with the Emperor in his Behalf ; and to engage in Return, That he would not only reconcile himself to the Church, but take such Measures, as should oblige his Subjects to do the same.

THE Chevalier's Reception at *Rome*, was as favourable as either he or his Master could wish. Pleased with any Opportunity to enlarge the Jurisdiction and Revenues of the Church, his Holiness very readily embraced his Proposals, comply'd with the Terms, and furnish'd him with the necessary Dispatches, with which he set out Post for *H——r*.

BUT scarce was he arrived, but, by the Information of *B—ns/d—ff*, who had worm'd the Secret out of one of the Lords of *Z—*, he was seiz'd by the *E—r*'s Command, and all his Papers being found upon him, there needed no State-Craft to give a Colour either to his Imprisonment or Sentence.

BUT, though the Servant was thus severely dealt with, the Prince his Master had Opportunity allowed him to make his Escape *: No Practices were left untry'd to incense the *E—r* against him ; but Nature interpos'd in his Behalf, and at last prevail'd.

IN the mean while, Madam *de P—n*, who began to despair of accomplishing the Princess's Ruin on her first Plan, thought this Conspiracy of Prince *M—n*'s with the Lords of *Z—*, would answer that grand End with more Expedition, as well as more Certainty.

WHILE, therefore, the Chevalier *K—* continued in close Imprisonment, and the Terrors of Death hung over him, all imaginable Arts were made use of to bring him to accuse her Highness of being an Accomplice ; and, though all proved ineffectual

* To *Vienna*, where he liv'd in the Emperor's Service, and dy'd a *Roman Catholic*.

effectual, a Charge was preferred against her notwithstanding; though unsupported by any Proofs, or even Circumstances which might justify a Suspicion; and she made her Defence with all the Spirit and Fortitude imaginable: Among other Things, insinuating, That her Accusers had no Foundation for offering her this fresh Indignity, except the Consciousness that their own Behaviour had given her sufficient Provocation to rush upon any Extremity, of any Kind. But, whatever Reason she had to think herself absolv'd from any other Ties, that her Children held same Interest in her Heart as ever, and no Persecution could or should deprive them of it.

BUT what contributed still more to manifest her Innocency was this: when the Chevalier *K*—— was at the Place of Execution, he purg'd her Highness in the most solemn and circumstantial Manner, from having the least Concern in, or Knowledge of, Prince *M*——'s Design; and this he persisted in to his last Breath.

NEVERTHELESS, tho' the World did her Justice, the Prince her Consort was not so open to Conviction; on the contrary, he affected still to believe her criminal, and to treat her accordingly; never looking upon her but with Scorn, or speaking of her

but with Resentment ; infomuch that her Heart grew too big to support fuch repeated Indignities any longer ; and, to render the Refidue of her Life tolerable, fhe found it neceffary, or thought it expedient, to make her Efcape into *France*.

To the Baronefs *de M——lk*, and *K——* only, fhe imparted this her Design, and by their Advice and Affiftance propoied to carry it into Execution ; but fo many Difficulties were to be furmounted, and fo many Dangers to be guarded againft, that frequent Meetings were made, and Confultations held, on fo delicate and important a Subject, which foon came to have the Air of a Cabal, and confequently attracted the Obfervation of thofe Court-Pefts, who fatten on the Wages of Iniquity.

IN fhort, Madam *de Pl——n* was infantly informed of all they had difcovered ; together with fuch Embellifhments of their own, as they believed would render their Intelligence yet more grateful ; and which fhe again, in her Turn, made Haffe to communicate to both the El——r and the Prince his Son, with proper Aggravations, that Ways and Means might be found to get at the Bottom of the Intrigue, and fuch Punifhment be inflicted on the Parties, as might flake, if not fatisfy, her Thirft of Revenge.

HAPPILY,

HAPPILY, however, the Princess and her two Friends had, by this Time, adjusted the principal Points under Deliberation; and, for Fear any Alarm should be taken, *K——* was forthwith to make a Visit to his * Sister, at the Court of King *A——s*, there to remain till all Things were ripe for the intended Escape, which, upon his Return, was to be made without any further Delay.

MADAM *de Pl——n* was utterly confounded at this unexpected Journey: as she thought nothing was more certain than that the Count's ambitious Designs upon the Princess, had hinder'd him from coming into her Measures; so she believed, that nothing but an Assurance of Success could have led him to sacrifice a Possession to a Prospect only.

WHEN, therefore, she flatter'd herself, that her Vengeance was at Hand, to see one of the principal Objects of it, give her the Slip, and thereby deprive her of all probable Means of reaching the other, it gave her the most sensible Mortification; and for a Time, she felt all the Bitterness of her own Malignant Disposition, with scarce a Hope to have it recompenced with the Sweets of a Gratification.

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BUT

* The Author of these Memoirs.

BUT, what was beyond her Policy or her Malice to compass, Chance put in her Power, when she least expected it. Let all those leaky Gallants, who have the Happiness to be in the good Graces of the Ladies, and all those Ladies who have been so unfortunate as to trust such leaky Gallants, take warning from what follows; since 'tis a Lesson, that both are equally concerned in.

IT happened, one Evening, while *K—* was at the *P—sb* Court, that, both the King and his Guests having drank away their Modesty and Discretion, a Proposal was made, and accepted, for every Man in Turn, to entertain the Company with an Account of his Love-Intrigues, not omitting either Names, Circumstances, or whatever else might give a Zest to his Narration. His Majesty not only gave in to this Proposal, but set the Example; and few scruple to follow, when King's lead the Way.

WHEN, therefore, it came to the Turn of *K—*, he first made his Adventures with Madam *de Pl—*, the Subject of his Comedy, which he set forth with all the Wit and Humour he was Master of, and likewise as minutely as possible; not forgetting, that, after all which had passed between them, she had the excessive Goodness
to

to make him an Offer of her Daughter. — Neither did he stop here: For, the Wine having turn'd his Brain, he had the Rashness to talk of the Princess; to expose the savage Disposition of her Husband; to boast of being in her Confidence, and to publish, that, at his Return, she had already agreed to make her Escape with him into *France*.

THE Company was numerous, and, as it may be imagined, all attentive; but nobody more so, than a certain *H——n* Nobleman; who, being in Disgrace at Home, had taken Sanctuary in the Court of King *A——s*, and, now thought he had the Means in his Power to make his Peace.

ACCORDINGLY, the Count had no sooner ended his frantic Confession, but, feigning himself to be quite intoxicated with the Fumes of the Liquor, he tumbled under the Table, and was carried off, as it was supposed, to sleep himself sober. But Sleep was the least of his Concern: He employed the Residue of the Night in filling a large Packet to Madam *de Pl——n*, containing all the Particulars of *K——k's* most inexcusable Folly; which, at Day-break, he sent Express to the Court of *H——*.

THE King himself, moreover, recollecting the next Day the Escapes of the Night, and thinking the Honour of all Sove-

reigns wounded in this bold Attempt of the Count's, dispatch'd a Courier likewise, with a Confirmation of every fatal Particular, betrayed before by the subtle *H—n*.

NOTHING could equal the Rage of Madam *de P—* on the Receipt of this Intelligence, but the Pleasure she took in persuading herself that the Head of her Apostate-Lover, would probably answer for the Intemperance of his Tongue. And, that no Time might be lost in spreading her Snares, she hasten'd to the *E—r's* Closet, to communicate as much as she thought proper of the *H—n's* Packet: that is to say, all that related to the Escape of the Princess; urging withal, That so black a Treason ought to be punished, if possible, as soon as known; and that, in order to get the Traitor into their Power, any flattering Invitation to some higher Post in the Army, would not fail to quicken his Return, since it would afford him the Opportunity he waited for to carry off the Princess.

WHILE they were yet in this Conference, the Count her Husband, sent his Secretary to the *E—r*, with the King of *P—*'s Dispatch, which was, cautiously, conceived in such Terms, as spared Madam *de P—*; and only express'd a tender Concern for the Honour

Honour of the Princess, so criminally exposed by this ungrateful *Swede*.

So authentic a Confirmation of the *H——n's* Discovery, *Madam de P——* did not fail to enforce with all the Arguments in her Power; and, consequently, made sure of her Point.

BUT she might have spared her Pains; for the Count himself, being apprized the next Day, of the Fault he had committed in his Cups, and justly afraid that it might be made Use of to his Prejudice, set out shortly after for *H——*, in hopes to carry his Project into Execution, before the ill Consequences, he had Reason to dread, should take Place.

As in such Places as *H——* it is scarce possible for any Stranger of Distinction to arrive without the Court's being made acquainted with it, *K——* judged it to be most for his Interest to wait upon the *E——r* as usual, like a Person who would not be thought conscious of any Misbehaviour: But though the *E——r* endeavoured to receive him likewise as if he had no Suspicion of the Truth, he was not able to be so much upon his Guard, but that *K——k* perceived all was not right, and, therefore, concluded every Thing was to be feared.

TAKING

TAKING his Leave, therefore, as soon as the Forms of a Court would allow, he made his next Visit to the El——s, where, also, he found the Princess, who could scarce contain the Satisfaction she received at the Sight of one whom she looked upon as her Deliverer.

THAT, however, not the least Hint for Suspicion might be given, she received his Court only at a Distance, and in common with the El——s; but withal, by a Whisper sent by the Baroness *de M——k*, which she believed had passed unnotic'd, let him know, that she would do him the Honour of a private Audience in the Evening.

BUT though this Message was sent and communicated with all imaginable Precaution, Madam *de ——* Sister to the Countess *de P——* and Mistress to the E——l Prince, who was then in the Circle, kept a vigilant Eye on all that passed, and, with the shrewdness peculiar to the Sex, guessed at the whole Truth, which she failed not to communicate both to her Sister and the El——r; who, being under the Influence of this Brace of Furies, was led to believe and resolve implicitly, as they directed.

K——k, they urged, would not fail to visit the Princess this very Night, and perhaps, to pacify his own Fears, or to put the Event out of Fortune's Power, might
over-

over-persuade her not to run the Risques of another Day : That, therefore, his Highness ought forthwith to exert himself, and secure the Honour of his Family, by the Death of this bold Invader, while he was yet within his Reach : Time being the grand Hinge on which the Success of all Things turn'd.

THIS fatal Cabal lasted the whole Day, which was spent by *K—k* in making Visits, and receiving Compliments on his Return ; a Ceremony which he thought necessary, both to fill up a tedious Interval, and likewise, to prevent, if possible, any Suspicion of his Plot, which was now, in every Circumstance, ripe for Execution.

THE Evening at last came, and all Things seemed to favour his Design. The E—l Prince was at the Court of *B—n* on a Visit : Madam *de Pl—n* was indisposed, and the El——r, as he fondly imagined, entertained no other Thoughts than of her Recovery. To the Baroness *de M—k's* Apartment, he therefore flew with more than ordinary Transport (having first caus'd his Equipage to be in readiness, and appointed his Servants their Posts) and was by her introduced to the Princess, at whose Feet he immediately fell with an Ardour which mere Court-Devotion very rarely inspires ; and being raised by her Highness with all
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the gracious Expressions which could signify Esteem and Acknowledgment, he proceeded to open to her the Dispositions he had made to render her Escape both certain and commodious ; with which she appearing to be extremely well satisfied, he took the Hint to press her to an instant Departure, enforcing the favourable Circumstances before mentioned, explaining to her the Expediency of so doing, if they had any Regard to their common Safety, and enlarging on the Dangers which probably might attend the least Delay. All which he uttered with so much Vehemence and Passion on one Hand, and Tenderneſs on the other, that the Tears often started into his Eyes, and dropped from hers.

So near a Prospect of Deliverance had all the Effect the Count could wish : She thought of it with Ecstasy, and regarded him with something more than Gratitude. But, when upon the Point of giving herself up to his Conduct, the Tenderneſs of the Mother got the Better of the Resentments of the Wife ; and she insisted upon being indulged with one Day, to give her last Embraces to her Children, before she took her Leave of them for ever.

BOTH the Count and the Baroness us'd their utmost Efforts to dissuade her from
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this unseasonable Tenderness ; but to no Purpose : My Children ! my Children, said she, have never offended me ; nor should I bear the Reproaches of my own Conscience, if I set out, without leaving such an Impression of their unhappy Mother's Affection upon their Minds, as Time itself shall not be able to efface.

THIS absolute Refusal struck the Count to the Heart : from the most sanguine Hopes, he sunk at once into Despair ; and, like one convinced that his Fate was sealed, passionately kissed her Hand, press'd it to his Bosom, and sighing said, Adieu, Madam ! may I prove a false Prophet ! but I fear this is the last Time you will see poor *K——k*.

WHILE these Passages took Place in the Princess's Closet, Madam *de Pl——n's* Spies carried the News of the Count's Visit, to the dark Cabal, we left sitting upon his Destiny ; upon which the *E——r* immediately resolved to close with his Favourite's bloody Proposal, and four of the most desperate Ruffians of his Guard were appointed to put it in Execution ; who had scarce taken the Posts assigned them, before the unhappy Victim, muffled up in his Cloak, fell into their merciless Hands ; and, though he made a shift to draw his Sword, and defended himself like a Man
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who was resolved not to part with his Life tamely, his Valour was of no other Use, than to redouble the Fury of his Assassins, who, in a few Minutes, cut him almost to Pieces : after which, having, by a Signal, before agreed upon, given Intimation, that they had fulfilled their Orders, the El——r himself joined them, and being satisfied that his Vengeance had fallen where it was directed, he ordered the Body to be thrown into a House of Ease adjoining, which the next Morning was brick'd up, as if esteemed the only proper Sepulchre for one who had the Presumption to meditate the Dishonour of the El——l House.

As the Stage where this Tragedy was performed was at some Distance from the Apartments of the Princess, she heard nothing of the Scuffle between the Count and his Assassins ; but, immediately after his Departure, began to prepare in Earnest for her Escape, which she had fixed for the Night following ; and, when retired to Rest, slept with less Perturbation than usual, as believing her Captivity was now at an End.

BUT, if the Night was Peace, the Morning was Trouble ; for scarce had she opened her Eyes, before she saw the Barons *de M——k* approaching her Bed-Side

Side with Horror in her Face ; and heard her sob forth,—Alas, Madam, the Count ! the poor Count ! without being able to utter more. Nor, indeed, was there any Occasion ; for her presaging Soul but too easily divin'd the rest. *De M—* melted into Tears, and, as an Accessary, not only lamented his Fate, but trembled for her own. The Princess, on the contrary, as if Affliction served only to ennoble her Faculties, and increase her Fortitude, scarce suffered her Complexion to change it's Hue, or one Muscle to express the least Hint either of Sorrow or Despondency. It is well, said she : I desired to be free ; and, if I become so, no Matter for the Way.—They have done their worst already.

By this Time, *de M—* having recovered the Use of her Speech, proceeded to inform her, that as to the Particulars of *K—k's* Destiny, they were yet unknown: only the Noise of a Fray had been heard; a large Quantity of Blood had been found; the El—r in Person had given some Mysterious Orders; the Count had never been seen since, and all his Papers had been seized. — To which, the Princess only replied, Then our Adversaries will, at once, be made sensible of our Innocence, and
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their own Guilt : And we shall suffer what they deserve.

THIS had Relation to certain Letters of hers to the Count ; in which the whole Scheme of her intended Escape was fully laid open, and the Dotage of the El——r, the brutal Behaviour of his Son, the infamous Lives of the two Sisters, their Bosom-Favourites, and the lethargic Indolence of the Duke her Father, were treated with all the Severity, that Indignities and Provocations without Number could inspire.

UPON these mischievous Letters, which none but the inconsiderate K——k would have preserved, the El——r and the two Sisters were sitting in Judgment, during this melancholy Conversation between the Princess and her Confidante ; and scarce was it over, before an Officer rudely burst into the Apartment, with an Order from the El———r to seize the Baroness, and commit her into close Custody, and to confine her Highness to her Chamber, till the E———r's farther Pleasure should be known.

THE same Day an Express was dispatch'd to the El———l Prince at B——n, and another to B——nsd——ff at Z——, to be delivered by him to the Duke, with Instructions proper to aggravate the ill Conduct

duct of the Princess, and qualify the Outrage of putting her under Confinement; all supported by such of her Letters as were writ when her Mind was most exasperated, and in which her Expressions were most obnoxious to sinister Interpretations.

THE Prince, as 'tis easy to imagine, felt no other Emotion on this Occasion, but that of Resentment; as he had never lov'd his Consort, it gave him little Uneasiness to find, that he had no longer any Share in the Heart he had been at such Pains to alienate: But then his Pride was hurt, and one Victim he thought scarce sufficient to atone for the Injury which he was persuaded to believe had been done him.

AT Z——, likewise, so exquisitely did B—nsd—ff play his Part, that though the Duchess threw herself at the Feet of the Duke, and conjured him in the most urgent and affecting Manner, not to give too lightly into ill Impression of the Princess his Daughter. He continued immoveable, saying only, As she hath forgot the Duty of a Daughter, she shall find I have no longer the Bowels of a Father. He then empower'd B—nsd—ff to signify to the E——r his Brother, That the Criminal he had in his Power, was, likewise, at his Mercy;

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and that however rigid his Sentence should prove, he would ratify it.

THIS Dispatch, savage as it was, did the Count of *Pl——n*, at the Instance of his Wife, put into the Hands of the Princess; and at the same Time gave her to understand, That it was the *El——r*'s Pleasure, that she should be instantly removed to the Castle of *A——n* (in the Dominions of *Z——*) there to remain the Residue of her Days.

BUT so little able was either the Message, or the Letter to shock her Firmness, that with an open Countenance she said, Tell the *El——r*, That when I turn my Back on *H——*, every Road is pleasant. To find that received as a Favour, which was meant as a Punishment, not affording the Count the Triumph he expected, he had the Insolence to ask her, whether her Familiarity with *K——k* had rendered a *M—d—W—e* necessary? And whether she was already provided? And was again put to Shame by the Princess's replying, — Sir, these modest Questions of yours, would be more pertinent to your Lady; or if you are afraid to take such Freedoms with her, intreat your Master to do it for you.

AT that Instant an Officer of the Guards coming in, and informing her that a Coach waited for her, and that she was com-

committed to his Charge. Let us go, Captain, said she, we can never be in worse Company than that we are now to leave. I am first to inform you, Madam, rejoin'd the Officer, that Count *K——k* is dead. He is happy, then, answered the Princess, which the guilty can never be. At these Words, darting a Look of Scorn and Contempt on the disappointed Wretch she was on the Point of leaving behind her, she quitted the Room, and, without so much as asking whither she was to be conducted, bid them drive on !

BEING at length arrived at the Castle appointed for her Prison, though in the Dominion of the Duke her Father, and but Eight Miles from his Capital, she found herself surrounded with the Creatures of her Husband, not one of whose Faces she had beheld before : And the very next Day after, two Secretaries from the Court of *H——r*, questioned her by Authority, concerning her Correspondence with the Deceased Count, and the Particulars of her intended Escape into *France* ; to whom, though under no Obligation to plead, she related the Motives, Views, and Ends of her whole Conduct, with the utmost Candour and Minuteness, and even took the Sacrament

by Way of Confirmation that all was true ; not, said she, to exact any Favour from him who was my Husband, but in Justice to my own Fame.

NOR was this noble Behaviour of hers lost upon the impartial World, who compared what she had done, with what she suffered ; and the Gallantry of her Defence, with the Shock it gave to her malicious Persecutors, and pronounced her not only free from Guilt, but worthy of a better Fate.

As a Proof of which, it is notorious, that the Prince her Husband, (fearful lest the Duke of Z—— should in Time get the better of his own peculiar Relentment, on Account of his Daughter's unguarded Expressions in her Letters to K——k, and in Consequence thereof, should retract the Instrument of Succession then subsisting in his Favour) actually made her Proposals of a Reconciliation ; to which she returned the following high-spirited Answer : Tell the Prince that he requires an Impossibility : for if I am Guilty, I am unworthy of him ; and if I am Innocent, he is unworthy of me.

THIS haughty Refusal, which was little expected, so highly exasperated the Prince, that B——n/d——ff received immediate

mediate Instructions to sollicit the Duke of Z——, his Master, to give his Consent to a Divorce, which he found Means to obtain ; and in Virtue thereof, such Practices were try'd on the two Confistories of H—— and Z——, that both were induc'd to pronounce the Marriage null and void ; which was nevertheless done with such apparent Partiality, that though the Prince was left at Liberty to marry when and whom he pleas'd, the Princess was deny'd the like Indulgence.

AND that no Door of Hope might ever be left open to her, when the El——r lay upon his Death-Bed, he induc'd the Duke, his Brother, to oblige himself by the most solemn Oath which could be framed, not to alter the Succession of his Dominions : and B——nsd——ff took Care to have it punctually observed ; For he had the Address to preserve his Ascendancy over his Master so entirely and effectually to the last, that when the Duke, likewise, felt his Dissolution approach, though importuned for Access and Forgiveness, by the unhappy Princess his Daughter, he was influenced to reject all her Instances, though back'd by those of her Mother : and thus, having refused Mercy, he died without a Pretence to ask it.

THE Princess had now her Mother's Sufferings to lament, as well as her own: for scarce was the Duke cold in his Grave, before his Dowager was obliged to quit the Ducal Palace, to which (nevertheless, no other Branch of the E——l House repaired) and in the Article of her Revenue, found a wide Difference, between the Promises of the Court of H—r, and the Execution.

THE new E—r, however, seemed, at last, inclinable to abate his Rigour to the Princess his Consort, by causing a Tender to be made her of her Liberty: But she was above accepting as a Favour, what she deem'd to be her Right; nor from him would condescend to accept of any Favour at all.

To the melancholy, as well as the Philosophic Mind, all Dwellings are indifferent; and thus the Place of her Confinement, which was at first so terrible, became at last her Choice: and so right a Use did she make of her Calamities, that she heard of the Death of Madam *de P—*, her worst Enemy, without the least Triumph, and of the Exaltation of the E—r, to the Throne of *****, without the least Envy, or the remotest Wish to share in his good Fortune.

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To hear that her Friend the Baroneſs *de M—k*, had the Courage to let herſelf down from the Tower of *N—g*, which was 180 Foot high, and the good Fortune to make her Eſcape to *Vienna*, after travelling ſeventy Miles on Foot, ſhe uſed to mention as one of the ſincereſt Pleaſures ſhe had ever taſted ; and that ſhe lived to cloſe her Mothers Eyes, as the moſt acute of her Miſfortunes.

AFTER that fatal Period, ſhe found herſelf in the World, as one who had no Relation to it, or Intereſt in it ; without Joy in the preſent, or Hope from the future ; at once, an affecting Example to the Princes of the Earth, of the Vanity of ſublunary Greatneſs, and a Warning to the World in general, not to preſume too confidently, That Innocence is out of the Reach of Slander.

DEATH, at laſt, looked upon her with a compaſſionate Eye, and drew the Curtain on her Calamities : But ſo peculiar was the Rigour of her Deſtiny, that even He could ſcarce redeem her out of the Hand of the Oppreſſor. Thoſe, moſt concerned in her Loſs, being denied the common Privilege of expreſſing their Senſe of it, even, in a ceremonial Mourning.

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